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ABSTRACT

The Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) was begun in 1984 to provide Federal support for magnet schools that are part of an approved voluntary or court-ordered desegregation plan. This report examines the impact of federally supported magnet schools on school desegregation, focusing specifically on schools supported through the MSAP in fiscal years 1989 and 1991. The study examines school districts receiving MSAP grants in these two 2-year funding cycles using data obtained from grantee program performance reports and from the U.S. Department of Education Common Core of Data Nonfiscal Survey files. MSAP funds were typically used to foster desegregation in schools with high proportions of minority students and in districts with increasing minority enrollments. However, desegregation objectives that were consistent with the statutory goals of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation could only be determined for three-fifths of schools targeted for desegregation impact. About half the schools targeted for desegregation impact were able to meet their objectives within the grant period. Success in meeting desegregation objectives was strongly associated with the demographic conditions surrounding the targeted school. Overall success was highest at the end of the grant period, and declined somewhat after the MSAP grant ended. There were modest improvements in racial balance in targeted schools, but the number of targeted schools that were minority isolated increased slightly during the grant periods. Overall, school success in reducing or preventing minority isolation was rather modest for the two grantee cohorts. Appendixes discuss technical issues in data and coding and present supplementary analyses. (Contains 22 tables, 7 appendix tables, and 2 references.) (SLD)

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Reducing, Eliminating, and Preventing Minority Isolation in American Schools:

The Impact of the Magnet Schools Assistance Program

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Executive Summary

The Purpose of this Report

Magnet schools offer a distinctive educational program and thus provide an incentive for students to enroll in schools outside of their immediate neighborhood. As a voluntary strategy for desegregating schools, magnets have become very popular: the number of magnet programs offered in elementary and secondary schools more than doubled between 1983 and 1992, and enrollment in magnet schools more than tripled.[1]

The Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) was initiated in 1984 to provide federal support for magnet schools that are part of an approved voluntary or court-ordered desegregation plan. Through MSAP, funds are provided to support the *elimination, reduction, or prevention of minority isolation* in elementary and secondary schools with substantial portions of minority group students. A school is

[1]See *Educational Innovation in Multiracial Contexts: The Growth of Magnet Schools in American Education* (Steel and Levine 1994).

considered "minority-isolated" if minority group students constitute more than 50 percent of the school's enrollment.[2]

In this report we examine the impact of federally supported magnet schools on school desegregation. Specifically, we examine the schools supported through MSAP in fiscal year (FY) 1989 and FY 1991, and we assess the extent to which they met their objectives of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation, either at their own sites or in one or more feeder schools. We also examine the extent to which these targeted magnet and feeder schools realized other desegregation outcomes.

Data Sources and Procedures

The study examines school districts receiving MSAP grants in two, two-year funding cycles, FY 1989 and FY 1991.[3] Information on the schools targeted for desegregation impact, and on the specific desegregation objectives for those schools, was derived from grantee documents, including grant applications, application reviews prepared by Department of Education staff, and grantee performance reports. Information on the enrollment outcomes realized by these schools was obtained from grantee program performance reports and from the U.S. Department of Education Common Core of Data (CCD) Nonfiscal Survey files.[4] To assess the desegregation impact of the MSAP grants and MSAP-supported magnets on the targeted schools, we compared the minority enrollment compositions for the year prior to the award of the MSAP grant to the minority enrollment compositions for the second year of the grant (i.e., the end of the grant period).

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[2]MSAP regulations define minority group students to include black, Hispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaskan Native children.

[3]FY 1989 grants supported magnet school programs during the 1989-90 and 1990-91 school years, and FY 1991 grants covered the 1991-92 and 1992-93 school years.

[4]The CCD files provide annual data on enrollment by race for nearly every school district in the United States.

Summary of Findings

1. *MSAP funds typically were used to foster desegregation in schools that had high proportions of minority students and that were located in districts experiencing increases in minority enrollments.*

The 89 school districts receiving MSAP support in FY 1989 and/or FY 1991—a total of 119 grant awards—sought to reduce, eliminate, or prevent minority isolation in 1,068 schools. Three-fourths (74 percent) of these targeted schools were minority-isolated (i.e., had minority enrollments of more than 50 percent), and in fact one-fourth (26 percent) had minority enrollments exceeding 80 percent. These schools were located in districts where minority student enrollments generally were both high (on average, 58 percent) and growing (by an average of over one percent a year).

2. *Desegregation objectives consistent with the statutory goals of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation could be determined for only three-fifths of the schools targeted for desegregation impact.*

Information available from program records explicitly identified objectives consistent with one of the three statutory desegregation goals for only 396 of the 1068 targeted schools (37 percent). Objectives could be inferred for an additional 219 schools. Thus, desegregation objectives consistent with the statutory goals of MSAP could be determined for a total of 615 schools (58 percent). These schools represented 111 (93 percent) of the 119 grantees in FY 1989 and FY 1991. Schools in voluntary-plan districts were somewhat more likely to have identifiable objectives consistent with the statutory goals (64 percent, compared to 52 percent in mandatory-plan districts). It was *not* possible to identify an objective consistent with the statutory goals for a substantial proportion of the targeted schools (453, or 42 percent). For most of these latter schools, grantees had provided some information regarding their desegregation goals, but these goals could not be classified in terms of the statutory goals of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation. Sixty percent of these schools (272 schools) were in districts with mandatory desegregation plans, which may pursue desegregation objectives required under the court or agency order rather than those outlined in the MSAP statute.

3. *More than half of the schools with an identifiable desegregation objective consistent with the statutory goals had the objective of reducing current minority isolation. For another one-fourth of the schools, the objective was to reduce projected increases in minority enrollment, which the Department interprets as consistent with the goal of reducing minority isolation.*

Of the 615 schools for which a desegregation objective consistent with the statutory goals could be identified, most (85 percent) had the objective of reducing current minority isolation. More than half (59 percent) had the objective of reducing minority enrollments. Another quarter (26 percent) of the targeted schools overall, and more than one-third (36 percent) of the targeted schools in mandatory-plan districts, sought to maintain current enrollment levels in the face of district-wide increases in minority enrollment; the Department interprets this as "reducing projected increases" in minority enrollment, consistent with the goal of reducing minority isolation. Relatively few schools were targeted for elimination or prevention of minority isolation (2 percent and 13 percent, respectively).

4. *Information on the extent to which the schools targeted for desegregation impact met their desegregation objectives was not readily available within the Department.*

Although the FY 1991 grantees were requested to provide annual performance reports containing data on desegregation outcomes, not all grantees did so. Moreover, the performance reports submitted were of limited value for assessing grantees' performance because few of the reports were linked to clearly identified desegregation objectives for targeted schools. MSAP statute and regulations do not require performance reports to identify desegregation objectives for targeted schools, or to link the enrollment data provided to such objectives. As a result, it was necessary to rely on enrollment data from the CCD Nonfiscal Survey files to assess program impact on school desegregation.

5. *About half of the schools targeted for desegregation impact were able to meet their desegregation objectives within the two-year period covered by the MSAP grants, while increasing minority enrollments in many of the districts constrained efforts to reduce or eliminate isolation in many schools.*

Overall, 47 percent of the 615 targeted schools with the objectives of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation had met their objectives by the end of the

two-year grant period. Another 17 percent of the targeted schools demonstrated some progress toward meeting their objectives. Schools in voluntary-plan districts were somewhat more successful in meeting objectives (51 percent) than were schools in mandatory-plan districts (44 percent). Nonisolated schools seeking to prevent becoming minority-isolated were the most successful in meeting their objectives (73 percent). Reducing minority isolation, often in the face of district-wide increases in minority enrollments, proved more difficult (44 percent).

Schools meeting their objectives sometimes achieved significant improvements in minority isolation, but overall, the amount of change in minority isolation was small. Schools meeting the objective of reducing current minority isolation had an average reduction of 5.9 percent, but among all schools targeted for reduction of current or projected minority isolation (including schools that did not meet their objectives), the average change was a 1.5 percent *increase*.

6. *Success in meeting desegregation objectives was strongly associated with the demographic conditions surrounding the targeted school, with success being much less likely in districts with high and rising percentages of minority students.*

Both district demographics and school enrollment composition relative to the district were strongly associated with the likelihood of a school meeting its desegregation objective. Higher initial levels of minority enrollment in the districts overall, as well as growth in minority enrollments within the districts, constrained opportunities for schools to attract sufficient "opposite-race" students to reduce, eliminate, or prevent minority isolation. However, schools that were more minority-isolated relative to their districts were more likely than others to meet their objectives of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation.

7. *Overall success in reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation was highest at the end of the two-year grant period, and declined somewhat after the MSAP grant ended.*

Available data allowed an assessment of desegregation impact at two, three, and four years after the grant for 291 schools targeted by FY 1989 grants. While 48 percent of these schools met their objective within the two-year grant period, the success rate declined over the following two years; only 40 percent of the schools met their objective after four years. Although some schools met their objective for the first time

three or four years after the grant, they were outnumbered by schools that had met their objective earlier, but failed to meet it at one or two later time points. Since districts were not required to continue meeting their objectives after the end of their grants, this analysis does not take into consideration other factors that may have occurred in the districts which would have affected these results, such as changing demographics or changing goals and objectives for these schools.

8. *Schools were generally less successful in meeting specific enrollment targets called for in their desegregation plans than they were in moving in the general direction described by their desegregation objective.*

Although not required by MSAP statute or regulations, many grantees' desegregation plans established specific minority enrollment composition targets to be met by schools. In general, schools were less successful in meeting these enrollment targets than in meeting the more general desegregation objectives of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation: of the 662 schools having such enrollment targets (as well as enrollment data to carry out the analysis), 255 (39 percent) had met those targets by the end of the grant period. Because the enrollment targets represent a specific level or range that the district is seeking to achieve, in many cases they represent a more ambitious goal than, for example, simply reducing the percentage of minority students by an unspecified amount. Indeed, schools with targets requiring little or no change in minority enrollments were more likely to meet their targets than were schools with more ambitious targets.

9. *There were modest improvements in racial balance among targeted schools in the grantee districts, but the number of targeted schools that were minority-isolated increased slightly during the two-year period covered by the MSAP grants.*

During the two-year period covered by the MSAP grant, over half (57 percent) of the 946 targeted schools for which enrollment data were available moved closer to the district-wide average in terms of minority enrollment composition. At the same time, the number of targeted schools that were minority-isolated (i.e., had minority enrollments exceeding 50 percent) increased. At the beginning of the grant period a total of 699 schools were minority-isolated, while by the end of the grant period, a total of 728 schools were minority-isolated—a net increase of 29 schools (4 percent).

Conclusions and Implications

The Magnet Schools Assistance Program provides support for magnet school programs, enabling districts to desegregate schools through voluntary means. Schools' success in meeting the statutory goals of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation, either in the magnet or in one or more targeted feeder schools, was relatively modest for these two grantee cohorts. This appears to be at least partly—and perhaps largely—due to the countervailing influence of demographic trends toward increased minority enrollments in these school districts. However, consideration should also be given to the following issues pertaining to the desegregation goals of MSAP.

First, the Department interprets the authorizing legislation to require that each funded school have the objective of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation, either at the magnet school or at one or more feeder schools. However, a substantial number of the grant applications submitted in 1989 and 1991 did not explicitly identify the desegregation objective of each school for which support was sought, and in some cases the schools targeted for desegregation impact (if other than the magnet) were not identified. As a result, it was necessary to request information on enrollment data and targets after applications were submitted. MSAP staff have, in recent funding cycles, provided more explicit written guidance to applicants regarding the conditions, including desegregation objectives, under which a school would be considered eligible for support. It will be important to determine whether this additional guidance leads applicants to identify more clearly the schools targeted for desegregation impact and the specific desegregation objectives for those schools.

Second, the standards for assessing each of the potential desegregation objectives may merit further consideration in light of the changing demographics in school districts today. In districts where overall minority enrollments exceed 50 percent, eliminating or preventing minority isolation in individual schools may be an unrealistic goal. Indeed, achieving any reductions in minority enrollment can be difficult when minority enrollments are increasing overall. The Department has recognized this difficulty in their interpretation of the "reduction" goal to include reducing projected increases in minority enrollment.

Finally, a number of school districts are operating under desegregation plans designed to promote racial balance across all schools in the district, rather than to reduce, eliminate, or prevent minority isolation in selected targeted schools. Although the

goal of racial balance is generally compatible with the statutory goals of MSAP, it is a somewhat broader concept that could also include schools with the objective of achieving or maintaining minority enrollment levels that approximate the district-wide minority composition, without reference to the 50 percent threshold defining "minority isolation." Consideration might be given to broadening the interpretation of MSAP goals to encompass racial balance plans, without the need to characterize specific schools as designed to reduce, eliminate or prevent minority isolation.

I. Introduction

Over the past several decades, magnet schools have become an important and increasingly popular method of promoting desegregation in the nation's school districts. The Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) was created in 1984 to provide federal support for magnet schools and magnet programs. As described in the enabling legislation, magnet schools are schools that offer "a special curriculum capable of attracting substantial numbers of students of different racial backgrounds."[1] Special curricula include courses of study that feature a particular subject matter (e.g., a math-science or humanities focus) or teaching methodology (e.g., individualized or Montessori programs). By offering a special program not generally available to students elsewhere in the district, magnets provide an incentive for students to enroll in schools outside their neighborhood attendance area, thus altering the minority enrollment composition of the schools in the district.

As a voluntary means of desegregating schools, magnets have proven very popular: between 1983 and 1992, the number of magnet schools more than doubled. By 1992, there were an estimated 2,433 magnet schools offering 3,171 magnet programs in

[1]Essential to this definition is the desegregation objective of magnet schools. Many districts offer schools with special curricula, which they may refer to as "magnets," but lacking a desegregation objective, those schools do not fit the statutory definition of magnet schools.

elementary and secondary schools nationwide. The number of students enrolled in magnet schools increased more than threefold during this same period.[2]

Magnet school programs[3] currently operate in a majority of the nation's large urban school systems. Desegregation is a significant and continuing issue for these districts, which tend to have high and increasing proportions of minority students. Federal government support through MSAP has helped increasing numbers of school districts to introduce magnet schools to their communities for the first time, or to increase the number and size of magnet programs in the district.

■ The Magnet Schools Assistance Program

The Magnet Schools Assistance Program, first enacted on August 11, 1984, provides assistance to school districts for the development or expansion of magnet school programs to support

- the elimination, reduction, or prevention of minority group isolation in elementary and secondary schools with substantial portions of minority students;[4] and

- courses of instruction within magnet schools that will substantially strengthen the knowledge of academic subjects and the grasp of

[2]See *Educational Innovation in Multiracial Contexts: The Growth of Magnet Schools in American Education* (Steel and Levine 1994).

[3]We use the term "magnet school program" in this report to refer to a district-wide program to promote desegregation, wherein one or more individual magnet schools or programs are available as options for students. The terms "magnet school" and "magnet school program" are used to refer to individual schools or programs within a district. For example, a district's magnet school program might include three individual magnet schools: a school of the arts, a school featuring Montessori instruction, and a school featuring a curriculum emphasizing basic skills.

[4]MSAP regulations define minority group students to include black, Hispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaskan Native children.

> tangible and marketable vocational skills of students attending such schools. *(P.L. 100-297, Title III, sec. 3003, 1988)*[5]

From the program's initial authorization through FY 1994, MSAP supported magnet programs in 138 school districts, with total grants amounting to $955 million over the 10-year period. Districts received grants ranging in size from $367,000 to $8 million for two years, with an average two-year award of $3.7 million.[6] A majority of MSAP grantees (74 districts, or 54 percent) received more than one MSAP award during this period, and nearly a quarter of all grantees (32 districts, or 23 percent) have received MSAP funding in three or more grant cycles.

■ Desegregation Objectives of the Magnet Schools Assistance Program

To be eligible to receive financial assistance through MSAP, school districts must either be implementing a court-ordered, state-ordered, or agency-ordered desegregation plan (referred to in this report as a *mandatory desegregation plan*), or be implementing (or willing to implement) a *voluntary desegregation plan* that is approved by the Secretary of Education as adequate under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

To be approved, voluntary desegregation plans submitted by school districts must be designed to reduce, eliminate, or prevent minority group isolation at each magnet school for which funding is sought, or at one or more feeder schools from which the magnet students are drawn.[7] The determination of whether the voluntary desegregation plan meets this statutory purpose is based on enrollment data and, as needed, explanatory information.

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[5]The *Improving America's Schools Act (IASA) of 1995* expanded the purposes of MSAP to include assisting LEAs in achieving systemic reform and in the development and design of innovative educational methods and practices. These goals were not in effect, however, during the period covered by this report.

[6]Prior to FY 1995, MSAP grants covered a two-year period, with funds allocated separately for each year of the grant period. The figures reported here represent totals for the two-year period covered by the grant.

[7]The school—magnet or feeder—at which minority group isolation is to be reduced, eliminated, or prevented is referred to in this report as the "targeted" school.

- For existing magnet schools, applicants are required to submit actual enrollment numbers and percentages, of minority and nonminority students, for each targeted school (a) for the year before the magnet was created, and (b) for the year in which the funding application is submitted. Also, projected enrollment figures (i.e., anticipated changes) for these targeted schools are required for each year of the proposed funding period.

- For new magnet schools, applicants are required to submit the actual enrollment numbers and percentages, for minority and nonminority students, for each targeted school for the year in which the funding application is submitted, and to submit for these schools projected enrollment figures (i.e., anticipated changes) for each year of the proposed funding period.

- Comparable district-wide enrollment numbers and percentages for minority group students, for the grade levels involved in the magnet schools proposed for funding, are also required.

During the period covered by this study, enrollment data required to approve voluntary desegregation plans were requested from applicants, as needed, after submission of the application and desegregation plan. The data requirements were regulated in FY 1993. Beginning in FY 1995, applicants were required to submit this data with their application and desegregation plan.

Mandatory desegregation plans, on the other hand, are not subject to an eligibility review. However, the status of the mandatory plan must be adequately documented and specific schools for which MSAP support is sought must be identified as part of the plan. Mandatory desegregation plans include a variety of desegregation approaches, such as activities to achieve district-wide racial balance, or other desegregation goals established by the court or other agency mandating the plan.

Projects were selected for funding based on a competitive application review and a determination that the applicant's desegregation plan was eligible for funding. The criteria used in the competitive review are described in the first report for this study.[8]

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[8]See *Educational Innovation in Multiracial Contexts: The Growth of Magnet Schools in American Education* (Steel and Levine 1994).

Modifications to the program regulations adopted in 1991 further specify that the establishment of a magnet school must not result in an increase in minority student enrollment, in either the magnet or any feeder school, above the minority student percentage for those grade levels in the district as a whole. This modification broadened the scope of MSAP to permit support for plans that seek to achieve racial balance in schools. It also codified criteria used to determine the eligibility of voluntary plans.

■ Purpose of this Report

This report investigates the extent to which the MSAP goals of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation in schools are being achieved by MSAP grantees. Drawing on data for the FY 1989 and FY 1991 MSAP grantees, two broad questions are addressed:

- How were the MSAP goals of reducing, preventing, or eliminating minority isolation translated into desegregation objectives for schools?

- To what extent did the schools targeted for desegregation impact succeed in meeting their desegregation objectives?

Neither the authorizing legislation nor the program regulations in effect for the period covered by this study specifically define standards for the "reduction," "elimination," or "prevention" of minority isolation in schools. Grantee applications frequently expressed their desegregation goals in ways that were not directly related to the statutory goals of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation. This report considers a number of different approaches to the definition of desegregation goals and objectives and of standards for meeting those objectives.

First, the program regulations define minority isolation as *a condition in which minority group children constitute more than 50 percent of the enrollment of the*

school [34 CFR Part 280.4(b) (11-1-89 Edition)].[9] This language implies the following:

- Schools with the objective of *reducing* minority isolation are minority-isolated to begin with; to meet this objective, they must achieve at least some reduction in their minority enrollment composition (although they may remain minority-isolated).

- Schools with the objective of *eliminating* minority isolation are also minority-isolated to begin with; to meet this objective they must achieve a minority enrollment level below 50 percent (i.e., become non-isolated).

- Schools with the objective of *preventing* minority isolation are not minority-isolated to begin with, and must remain non-isolated (i.e., minority enrollments remain below 50 percent).

However, many of the school districts supported by MSAP have minority enrollments that are both well in excess of 50 percent and growing. As a result, achieving decreases in minority enrollment or even maintaining current minority enrollment composition levels may be difficult for schools in these districts. In recognition of these demographic trends, the Department of Education has interpreted the "reduction" objective to include *reducing projected increases* in minority isolation (i.e., either maintaining the current enrollment composition in the face of district-wide increases in minority enrollment, or keeping the increase in the school's minority enrollment lower than the district-wide increase in minority enrollment).[10]

An alternative approach to defining desegregation goals is found in the grantees' statements regarding minority enrollment goals for the targeted schools. Although not specified under MSAP statute or regulations, grantees were required to submit *minority enrollment goals,* or *targets,* for the schools targeted for desegregation impact. These goals typically were expressed in terms of achieving either a particular level of minority enrollment, or a minority enrollment level falling within a specified

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[9]Some court orders employ different standards (for example, defining schools with more than 80 percent as minority-isolated). However, for these analyses the regulatory definition for MSAP is used.

[10]This interpretation is reflected in the Notice Inviting Application for New Awards for FY 1995 [60 FR 14869-14871, March 20, 1995].

range of values. While not expressed in terms of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation, these enrollment targets do represent desegregation goals as perceived by the grantees.

In this report we examine the extent of reduction, elimination, and prevention of minority isolation in schools receiving MSAP support in FY 1989 and FY 1991,[11] from each of these perspectives. In addition, we examine the overall extent of change in these schools' minority enrollment composition.

Chapter II of this report describes the demographic characteristics of the districts and schools that were approved for funding by MSAP, as well as the desegregation objectives that were identified for each school targeted for desegregation impact. Specifically, we examine the numbers of schools with objectives of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation (including reducing projected increases in minority isolation), and the numbers that established more specific minority enrollment goals or targets.

Chapters III and IV present data on the extent to which schools targeted for desegregation met their objectives and enrollment targets. Chapter III examines the extent to which schools targeted for reducing, preventing, or eliminating minority isolation (including reducing projected increases in minority isolation) met those objectives; chapter IV examines the extent to which schools that specified minority enrollment targets achieved them. For each set of analyses, we also examine whether particular characteristics of MSAP-supported school districts, targeted schools, and magnet programs are associated with success in meeting desegregation objectives.

Chapter V examines the overall change in minority enrollment composition for these targeted schools: the change in the overall number of minority-isolated schools, and the extent of improvement in racial balance across schools.

The concluding chapter (chapter VI) summarizes findings from the various analyses and discusses the implications for monitoring MSAP program performance.

Because districts operating under mandatory desegregation plans may be required under court order to take specific actions not reflected in the MSAP statute or

[11]FY 1989 grants supported magnet school programs during the 1989-90 and 1990-91 school years, and FY 1991 grants covered the 1991-92 and 1992-93 school years.

regulations, analysis results throughout are presented separately for schools in voluntary- versus mandatory-plan districts.

■ Design and Data

To address the questions posed above, this report draws on data for two recent cohorts of MSAP grantees: those receiving support in the FY 1989 and the FY 1991 funding cycles—a total of 119 grants awarded to a total of 89 districts.[12] The FY 1989 and FY 1991 grantee cohorts were the focus of the study in large part because the application and progress reporting requirements for these cohorts resulted in more detailed information on program objectives and performance—especially for FY 1991 grantees—than was available for earlier cohorts.

Drawing on grant applications and progress reports, we identified the specific magnet schools being supported under each grant, the specific schools targeted for desegregation impact by each magnet (i.e., the magnet itself or one or more feeder schools), and the desegregation objectives of those targeted schools. Enrollment data were then examined for each targeted school to determine the extent to which the school was able to achieve its desegregation objective. Specifically, minority and nonminority enrollments for the year prior to the grant were compared to the minority and nonminority enrollments for the second year of the grant in order to assess changes in schools' minority enrollment compositions over the period covered by the grant.

Data on Targeted Schools and Desegregation Objectives. Grant applications, copies of the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) Plan Eligibility Determination report, and (for 1991 grantees) copies of the first and second Annual Performance Reports were the primary resources for identifying targeted schools, their desegregation objectives, and the type of desegregation plan operative in each district. In cases in which grantees identified specific minority enrollment targets to be achieved, these were noted as well. Finally, the applications provided information on the history and extent

[12]Thirty of the districts were funded during both cycles. For analysis purposes, however, the 119 grantees are treated as 119 separate entities.

of the district's magnet school program and the characteristics of individual magnet schools and programs supported under the grant.[13]

In 1994, when data were collected, grant documents containing information on targeted schools and their desegregation objectives were available for nearly all grantees (see table I-1). These grant documents identified a total of 1,068 schools that were targeted for desegregation impact. Of these, an objective consistent with the statutory goals of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation (including reducing projected increases in minority isolation) could be identified for 615 schools, or 58 percent of the schools targeted for desegregation impact. These schools represent 111 (93 percent) of the 119 grantees in the FY 1989 and FY 1991 funding cycles. Schools in districts operating under voluntary desegregation plans approved by the Department of Education were more likely to have identifiable desegregation objectives consistent with the statutory goals than were schools in districts operating under mandatory plans (64 percent versus 52 percent).

Table I-1
Data Available for MSAP Grantee Districts in FY 1989 and FY 1991 Funding Cycles

	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
Grantee districts receiving MSAP support	**68**	**51**	**119**
Number with grant documents allowing identification of desegregation objective	66	45	111
Schools targeted for desegregation impact	**504**	**564**	**1,068**
Number with identifiable desegregation objective	323	292	615
Number with specified minority enrollment target	363	366	729

[13]In addition, some district-level descriptive data, such as the proportion of low income students in the district, were obtained from responses to a national survey of magnet schools conducted by AIR in 1992, as a part of this study. District-level enrollment characteristics (e.g., the initial proportion of all schools in the district that were minority-isolated) were generated from the CCD files.

Many of the districts receiving MSAP awards also provided more specific minority enrollment goals for the targeted schools. Of the 1,068 targeted schools, 729 (68 percent) had explicitly stated minority enrollment targets.

Enrollment Data and Analysis Samples. Enrollment outcomes for targeted schools were determined by comparing each school's enrollment composition against its desegregation objective. Base-year and follow-up enrollment data for the targeted schools were obtained from the Common Core of Data (CCD) Nonfiscal Survey files for 1988-89, 1990-91, and 1992-93, as shown in table I-2.[14] Because some objectives were based on the overall percentage of minority students in the district (or at a given grade level), data on district-level enrollment proportions were also derived from CCD files and included in the analysis data set.

Table I-2
Base-Year and Follow-up Years for FY 1989 and FY 1991 MSAP Grantees

MSAP Grantee Cohort	Base-Year	Follow-up
FY 1989 grantees	1988-89	1990-91
FY 1991 grantees	1990-91	1992-93

The CCD files contained enrollment data by race-ethnicity for most school districts in the sample: the 1988 file contained ethnic data for all but four districts, the 1990 file lacked ethnic data for only two districts, and the 1992 file lacked ethnic data for only one district. As a result, two years of enrollment data by race were available for 946

[14]Initially we had planned to extract base-year and follow-up enrollment data for the FY 1991 MSAP grantees from the performance reports submitted annually by grantees. However, several grantees had not submitted second-year performance reports by the time these data were being collected. In other cases, data were not provided in a usable form. For example, a few districts reported enrollment statistics in aggregate rather than for individual schools, for within-school programs rather than the whole school, or for ethnic groupings that included some minority groups in the nonminority category.

(89 percent) of the schools targeted for desegregation impact (see table I-3).[15] However, only 615 (58 percent) of the targeted schools had *both* identifiable desegregation objectives consistent with the statutory goals and enrollment data that allowed us to determine whether or not the objective had been achieved, and only 662 (62 percent) had *both* specified minority enrollment targets and enrollment data sufficient to determine the ambitiousness of the target and whether or not the target was met. The analysis samples are thus restricted to 615 schools for analyses of attainment of desegregation *objectives*, and to 662 schools for analyses of meeting enrollment *targets*. (See appendix A for a discussion of the specific data needed to determine outcomes for each desegregation objective and desegregation target.)

Table I-3
Analysis Samples for MSAP Grantee Districts and Schools in FY 1989 and FY 1991 Funding Cycles

	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
Schools with pre- and post- enrollment data	434	512	946
Schools with *both* desegregation objective and enrollment data	323	292	615
Schools with *both* minority enrollment target and enrollment data	326	336	662

[15]In a few instances the data recorded in the CCD files were markedly inconsistent with information provided in the grant applications; given the ambiguity regarding the accuracy of the data, these cases were subsequently excluded from analyses.

II. Characteristics of MSAP Districts and Schools

MSAP funds are intended to assist districts operating under either mandatory or voluntary desegregation plans to implement or expand magnet school programs. Within those districts, MSAP funds are specifically intended to promote desegregation in schools with substantial proportions of minority students. In this chapter we present information on the districts and schools that received MSAP funds in the FY 1989 and FY 1991 grant cycles. Specifically, we examine district and school demographic characteristics, and the desegregation objectives that were set for each targeted school.

■ What Kinds of Districts Receive Support from the Magnet Schools Assistance Program?

Desegregation Plans. To be eligible to receive assistance from MSAP, a school district must be implementing a mandatory desegregation plan (i.e., one that is ordered by a court, state agency, or the Office for Civil Rights [OCR] in the Department of Education), or a voluntary plan that has been approved by the U.S. Department of Education. Sixty-eight (57 percent) of the 119 MSAP grantees were operating their

magnet schools as part of voluntary desegregation plans, while the remaining 51 (43 percent) were operating under mandatory desegregation plans.

District Size and Demography. Most MSAP grants were awarded to large urban or suburban school districts with large percentages of poor and minority students (see table II-1). Most of the grants awarded by MSAP during the FY 1989 and FY 1991 funding cycles supported school districts with 10,000 or more students (84 percent of grantees), and more than one-fourth (26 percent) were very large districts with 50,000 or more students. Slightly more than half of the grantees were districts in which a majority of the students served were poor (i.e., qualified for free or reduced-price meals). Nearly two-thirds of the grantees were districts in which more than half of the students were members of minority groups; however, district minority composition varied considerably among grantees. While the average minority enrollment across all the grantee districts was 58 percent, minority enrollments ranged from lows of 5 and 20 percent to a high of 97 percent. Districts operating under a mandatory desegregation plan were more likely to be very large districts, but districts with voluntary plans were more likely to have higher proportions of poor and minority students.

Not surprisingly, given the goals of MSAP, grantee districts tended to be characterized by a high degree of minority isolation in schools. Overall, an average of 59 percent of all schools in the grantee districts were minority-isolated as defined by the MSAP regulations (i.e., more than half of their students were members of minority groups). Just under one-quarter of the schools (24 percent) were highly minority-isolated, with minority enrollments of 80 percent or more. Moreover, these districts are becoming increasingly minority-isolated: in virtually all (90 percent) of the districts, the proportion of minority students increased during the grant period, with an average increase of over 1 percentage point per year (a total of 2.4 percentage points over two years).

Table II-1

Demographic Characteristics of Districts Receiving MSAP Support in FY 1989 and FY 1991, by Source of Desegregation Plan and Overall

	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
Size			
Avg. # schools/district	59	80	68
Number of students:			
% < 10,000	19%	12%	16%
% 10-50,000	61%	54%	58%
% >50,000	19%	34%	26%
(N)	(67)	(50)	(117)
Demographic characteristics			
% with >50% low-income students	56%	47%	52%
(N)	(62)	(45)	(107)
% with >50% minority	70%	60%	66%
Avg. % minority in district	60%	55%	58%
(N)	(64)	(48)	(112)
Change in district minority enrollment over grant period			
% with increasing % minority	89%	92%	90%
Avg. increase in % minority	2.4	2.3	2.4
(N)	(64)	(48)	(112)
Minority isolation in district schools			
% schools minority-isolated (>50% minority)	60%	58%	59%
% schools highly isolated (>80% minority)	29%	19%	24%
(N)	(64)	(48)	(112)
Total N (Grantees)	68	51	119

History of Magnet Program Involvement. Most MSAP grantees (84 percent) already had functioning magnet school programs in place at the time of the grant award (see table II-2). When their grant applications were submitted, these magnet school programs had been operating for an average of nine years, and included an average of 14 magnets. More than half of the districts (57 percent) had received MSAP support during one or more previous funding cycles. Thus, most of the FY 1989 and FY 1991 grants were used to enhance established magnet school programs, either by initiating new magnets or expanding those already existing. However,

16 percent of the MSAP grants were used to establish magnet school programs in districts that had not previously offered them.

Table II-2
Magnet Program History for Districts Receiving MSAP Support in FY 1989 and FY 1991, by Source of Desegregation Plan and Overall

	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
% with prior magnets[1]	84%	84%	84%
Avg. # of prior magnets	13	15	14
Avg. # years since first magnet	9	9	9
(N)	(63)	(49)	(112)
% with prior MSAP awards	62%	51%	57%
(N)	(68)	(51)	(119)
Total N (Grantees)	68	51	119

■ What Kinds of Magnet Schools Are Being Supported by MSAP?

Numbers of Magnets Supported. Over the two funding cycles, MSAP funds supported 1,043 magnet schools in 119 grantee districts (for an average of 9 magnets per district) (see table II-3). The number of MSAP-supported magnets in a district ranged from 1 to 46. Districts operating under mandatory desegregation plans tended to have slightly more MSAP-supported magnets (an average of 10 per district) than districts with voluntary desegregation plans (8 per district). This may reflect the fact that (for these grantees) the districts with mandatory plans tended to be larger and to have more schools generally than the districts with voluntary plans.

[1] Statistics on prior magnet programs operating in the district were based on 112 districts for which such data were available.

Table II-3
Characteristics of Magnet Schools Supported under FY 1989 and FY 1991 MSAP Grants, by Source of Desegregation Plan and Overall

	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
Number of magnet schools supported	509	534	1,043
Average number per district	8	10	9
Max. number per district	29	46	46
Grade level served			
% elementary	60%	49%	54%
% intermediate	21%	16%	18%
% secondary	12%	21%	17%
% other	7%	13%	10%
(N)	(509)	(534)	(1,043)
Program type			
% program type known[2]	71%	81%	76%
(N)	(509)	(534)	(1,043)
% whole school-dedicated	28%	26%	27%
% whole school-attendance zone	51%	20%	34%
% program within school	21%	54%	39%
(N)	(363)	(435)	(798)

Grade Level. More than half of the magnet schools receiving MSAP support were elementary schools. However, districts with mandatory desegregation plans were somewhat more likely to support magnet programs at the high school level, and less likely to support elementary school magnets, than were districts with voluntary plans.

Types of Programs Supported. Overall, 39 percent of the magnet schools supported by MSAP during FY 1989 and FY 1991 operated one or more programs-within-a-school (*PWSs*).[3] Another 34 percent were whole school programs that gave some preference to applicants living within the school's attendance zone (*attendance zone magnets*), and 27 percent were whole school programs that gave no preference to

[2] Statistics on program type based on 798 schools for which such data were available.

[3] A program-within-a-school program serves some but not all students in a school. For example, a high school program in environmental studies in which 300 of the school's 1500 students participate is a PWS.

applicants based on residence in an attendance zone (*dedicated magnets*). PWS magnets were much more prevalent in districts operating under mandatory desegregation plans (in which they represented 54 percent of all magnets) than in districts with voluntary plans (in which PWSs comprised only 21 percent of all magnets). Moreover, most high school magnet programs (64 percent) were PWS magnets. Thus, source of desegregation plan, type of magnet program, and school level tended to be interrelated.

■ What Kinds of Schools Are Targeted for Desegregation Impact by MSAP-Supported Magnet Programs?

The desegregation objective of an MSAP-supported school may be to affect minority isolation in the magnet school itself *or* in one or more feeder schools (i.e., schools from which students are drawn to attend the magnet school). Thus, the subsequent analyses examine the desegregation effects of MSAP in *schools targeted for desegregation impact* rather than the magnet schools *per se*.

Grantee documents indicated that almost all of the 1,043 magnet schools receiving MSAP support in the FY 1989 and FY 1991 grant cycles were themselves targeted for desegregation impact (see table II-4). Only 24 (2 percent) of these schools were characterized as having the objective of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation in one or more feeder schools. In some instances, the designated feeders were other magnets in the district. However, these grantees also identified a total of 49 *nonmagnet feeder schools*, with the majority (42) located in districts operating under mandatory desegregation plans. (We suspect that the actual number of magnets that targeted a feeder school for desegregation impact is somewhat higher—specifically, that many of the magnets that projected increases in their minority enrollments in fact were designed to reduce minority enrollments in other schools not explicitly identified in available grant documents.)

Table II-4

Magnet Schools and Schools Targeted for Desegregation Impact by FY 1989 and FY 1991 MSAP Grants, by Source of Desegregation Plan and Overall

	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
Number of magnet schools	509	534	1,043
Number targeting feeder schools	12	12	24
Number of targeted feeder schools	7	42	49
Total number of targeted schools	504	564	1,068
Avg. number per district	7	11	9

The total number of schools targeted for desegregation impact by the FY 1989 and FY 1991 MSAP grantees was 1,068 (1,019 magnets and 49 nonmagnet feeders). Within individual districts, the number of targeted schools ranged from 1 to 46, with an overall average of 9 schools per district.

Minority Isolation. Consistent with the MSAP emphasis on schools with high proportions of minority students, most (74 percent) of the schools targeted for desegregation impact were minority-isolated as defined in the program regulations (i.e., had minority enrollments exceeding 50 percent) (see table II-5). One-fourth of the targeted schools could be considered highly isolated, with initial minority enrollments exceeding 80 percent. The targeted schools in districts operating under mandatory desegregation plans were somewhat more likely to be minority-isolated than were those in districts operating under voluntary plans (79 percent versus 68 percent).

Table II-5
Characteristics of Schools Targeted for Desegregation Impact, by Source of Desegregation Plan and Overall

	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
Total number of schools	504	564	1,068
Initial race composition of schools[4]			
Average % minority	64%	66%	65%
% isolated schools (>50% minority)	68%	79%	74%
% highly isolated schools (>80% minority)	26%	26%	26%
% relatively isolated schools:			
> district avg. % minority	58%	60%	59%
> district avg. % minority + 10	36%	36%	36%
(N)	(434)	(512)	(946)

More than half (59 percent) of the targeted schools could be considered *relatively isolated*, with minority enrollments that were higher than the average minority enrollment for the district as a whole, and approximately one-third (36 percent) had minority enrollments that exceeded the average minority enrollment for the district by more than 10 percentage points.

■ What Are the Specific Desegregation Objectives of MSAP-Supported Magnet Schools?

The statute identifies three goals for MSAP-supported schools: the reduction, elimination, and prevention of minority isolation. As discussed in the introduction, a school is minority-isolated if minority children comprise more than 50 percent of the enrollment of the school. Thus, to *reduce* minority isolation is to reduce the percentage of minority students in a minority-isolated school; to *eliminate* minority isolation is to reduce a school's percentage of minority students to less than 50 percent of enrollment; and to *prevent* minority isolation is to keep a school's percentage of minority students from rising above 50 percent of enrollment.

[4] Statistics on race composition based on 946 schools for which such data were available (in CCD).

As interpreted by the Department of Education, a reduction in minority isolation can mean one of two things: 1) a *reduction* in the current minority enrollment level, or 2) a *reduction of a projected increase* in minority enrollments. The objective of reducing a projected increase in minority isolation would occur in a context of increasing minority enrollment in the district as a whole, which makes maintaining current enrollment levels more difficult. This objective is achieved if the school's percentage of minority students is prevented from rising as fast as the district-wide average rate of increase. For the remainder of this report, findings regarding schools with the objective of reducing minority isolation are shown both separately and combined for these two groups.

MSAP grantees explicitly identified one of the statutory MSAP objectives (i.e., reduce, eliminate, or prevent minority isolation) for only 396, or 37 percent, of schools targeted for desegregation impact. One of these three objectives could be inferred[5] for an additional 219 schools (20 percent of targeted schools), bringing the total number of schools with identifiable desegregation objectives to 615, or 58 percent of targeted schools. These schools represent 111 (93 percent) of the 119 grantees in FY 1989 and FY 1991.

More than four-fifths (85 percent) of targeted schools for which a desegregation objective could be determined had the objective of reducing minority isolation (see table II-6). Nearly three-fifths (59 percent) of targeted schools had the objective of reducing the current percentage of minority students, and an additional 26 percent had the objective of reducing projected increases in minority enrollments. Two-thirds (65 percent) of the schools whose objective was to reduce projected increases were in districts with mandatory desegregation plans. The more ambitious objective of eliminating minority isolation was rare (2 percent of targeted schools), and the objective for the remaining 13 percent of targeted schools was to prevent minority isolation.

Schools with the objectives of reducing or eliminating minority isolation tended to have concentrations of minority students well above the 50 percent threshold that

[5] For example, if the grantee did not explicitly specify a desegregation objective for a school, but provided a target minority enrollment percentage that was smaller than the school's base year percentage of minority students, we inferred that the school's desegregation objective was to reduce minority isolation.

defines minority isolation (see tables B-1/B-3 in appendix B). Average minority enrollment levels were 79 percent for schools with the objective of reducing current minority enrollment, 64 percent for schools with the objective of reducing projected increases in isolation, and 69 percent for schools with the objective of eliminating isolation. "Prevention" schools, which are not minority-isolated (at least initially), had average minority enrollments of 41 percent (see table B-4 in appendix B).

Table II-6
Objectives of Schools Targeted for Desegregation Impact, by Source of Desegregation Plan and Overall

	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
Number of targeted schools with desegregation objectives	323	292	615
% of targeted schools	64%	52%	58%
Type of objective[6]			
Reduce isolation	80% *(258)*	90% *(263)*	85% *(529)*
Reduce current enrollment	64% *(205)*	54% *(157)*	59% *(362)*
Reduce projected increase	16% *(53)*	36% *(106)*	26% *(159)*
Eliminate isolation	2% *(7)*	2% *(5)*	2% *(12)*
Prevent isolation	18% *(58)*	8% *(24)*	13% *(82)*

Schools for which Objectives Could Not Be Determined. Desegregation objectives consistent with the statutory goals of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation could not be determined for 453 (42 percent) of the targeted schools. These schools represented 80 of the 119 grantees included in the analyses. Approximately one-third of these schools (145 schools) were located in eight grantee districts where it was not possible to identify desegregation objectives for *any* of the schools targeted

[6] Numbers in italics indicate the number of schools having that objective.

for desegregation impact in a particular funding cycle.[7] The remaining 308 schools represented 72 grantees; for three-fourths (55) of these grantees, the number of targeted schools for which desegregation objectives could not be determined was five or fewer.

Of the 453 targeted schools for which objectives consistent with one of the three statutory MSAP goals could not be identified, 60 percent (272 schools) were located in districts with mandatory desegregation plans. Schools in such districts may pursue desegregation objectives required under the desegregation plan rather than those outlined in the MSAP statute. For the remaining 181 schools in districts operating under voluntary desegregation plans (17 percent of all targeted schools), there were a variety of reasons why objectives consistent with one of the statutory MSAP goals could not be identified (see table II-7):

- The grantee described plans to increase minority enrollments at a targeted school (79 schools). It is likely that these schools were in districts seeking to improve racial balance across schools, increasing minority enrollment in these schools in order to cause reductions in feeder schools. However, since available documents did not identify these probable feeder schools, we were unable to include them in these analyses.

- The school was newly established or scheduled to re-open as a magnet after being closed for a year or more (31 schools). The school, therefore, had no baseline enrollment data against which to measure change.

- Baseline enrollment data either were not available at all, or were not complete enough to verify the objectives (29 schools).

- Available documentation did not include sufficient information to identify any desegregation objective for the targeted schools (22 schools).

[7] There were a variety of reasons why objectives could not be determined for *any* of the schools in these grantee districts. In some cases, the application was missing from program files, and the grantee documents that were available lacked sufficient information about the objectives. In other cases, applications or other documents specified outdated or unverifiable information on schools' desegregation objectives, or specified desegregation objectives that were not consistent with a minority-white framework.

- The grantee indicated an intention to "reduce" minority isolation, but the schools were not in fact minority-isolated (15 schools).

- The grantee described desegregation objectives that were ambiguous or did not fit within the framework of this analysis (5 schools).

Table II-7
Schools Targeted for Desegregation Impact for which Desegregation Objectives Could Not Be Determined

	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
Total schools for which desegregation objective could not be determined	**181**	**272**	**453**
New schools (no baseline enrollment data against which to measure change)	31	14	45
Insufficient information to determine intent	22	67	89
Unable to classify objective			
Schools with objective of increasing minority enrollment	79	74	153
Schools with missing or incomplete baseline data	29	56	85
Schools with objective of reducing minority isolation that are already nonisolated	15	5	20
Schools where desegregation objective is ambiguous	5	56	61

The study's inability to identify objectives for these schools does not necessarily mean that documentation of their objectives was not provided at the time the grant applications were approved. When applications did not clearly specify schools objectives, Department of Education staff may have sought additional information from districts when reviewing grant applications; however, no records of such additional information were available when this analysis was conducted.

Desegregation Targets. Although MSAP grantees were not required to include in their applications specific minority enrollment targets (i.e., minority enrollment percentages) for their targeted schools, many did so. In some cases, minority enrollment targets had been specified by the district's desegregation plan; in other instances, targets were derived from minority enrollment projections for the magnet (or feeder) schools given in the MSAP application.

Enrollment targets were commonly expressed in one of three ways (see table II-8). Many (40 percent) referred to reducing (or increasing) minority enrollment in the school by a certain amount or to a specific level. Some (12 percent) referred to increasing minority enrollments above a minimum or decreasing them below a maximum. These two types of enrollment targets were most likely to be associated with voluntary desegregation plans. The remaining enrollment targets (48 percent) were expressed in terms of bringing the level of minority enrollment to within a specified range, generally referenced to the overall district average (e.g., the district average ±10 percent). Targeted ranges were somewhat more likely to be found in districts operating under a mandatory desegregation plan.

Table II-8

Minority Enrollment Targets of Schools Targeted for Desegregation Impact, by Source of Desegregation Plan and Overall

	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
Number of targeted schools with minority enrollment targets[8]	363	366	729
% of targeted schools	72%	65%	68%
Form of enrollment target			
Specific level of % minority	46%	33%	40%
Min. or max. % minority	15%	9%	12%
Range in % minority	39%	57%	48%
(N)	(363)	(366)	(729)

The enrollment targets specified represented a reduction in minority enrollment for about two-fifths (39 percent) of the schools (see table II-9). Two factors account for the apparent disparity between the proportion of schools with the *objective* of reducing minority enrollments directly (59 percent, as reported in table II-6) and the proportion of schools with *enrollment targets* requiring a decrease in minority enrollments (39 percent, as reported in table II-9). First, the sets of schools upon which the percentages are based do not overlap completely: 164 out of 662 schools with a minority enrollment target had no desegregation objective consistent with the statutory goals, while 117 out of 615 schools with an objective had no enrollment target. Second, a substantial fraction of the schools with the objective of reducing current minority enrollments had an enrollment target that was comparable with the school's base-year minority enrollment. Such targets could be met without further reductions in minority enrollments. Note also that schools with the objective of "reducing projected increases" (26 percent—see table II-6) usually had targets that were comparable to their base year level or even allowed for limited increases in minority enrollment.

[8] Statistics on the form of the enrollment target based on 729 schools for which grantees specified a target level or range.

Table II-9
Nature of Minority Enrollment Targets for Schools Targeted for Desegregation Impact, by Source of Desegregation Plan and Overall

	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
Relation to current minority enrollment level[9]			
Below current enrollment level	50%	29%	39%
Comparable to current enrollment level	26%	43%	35%
Above current enrollment level	19%	26%	23%
New school (no base year data)	5%	2%	3%
(N)	(326)	(336)	(662)
Ambitiousness of enrollment targets below current minority enrollment level			
Change of 0-3% minority needed	22%	29%	24%
Change of 3-10% minority needed	41%	34%	39%
Change of >10% minority needed	37%	36%	37%
(N)	(162)	(96)	(258)
Ambitiousness of enrollment targets above current minority enrollment level			
Change of 0-3% minority needed	24%	34%	30%
Change of 3-10% minority needed	45%	33%	38%
Change of >10% minority needed	31%	34%	32%
(N)	(62)	(89)	(151)

Among schools in voluntary-plan districts, enrollment targets were most likely to represent a reduction in minority enrollment; in mandatory-plan districts, however, enrollment targets were more likely to be comparable to the current minority enrollment levels such that no change was required (e.g., a school might already be within the specified minority enrollment range). Typically, enrollment targets represented goals to be achieved (or, at least, approached) over a period longer than the two years covered by the MSAP grants. This may be reflected in the tendency for

[9] Statistics on nature and ambitiousness of enrollment targets based on 662 cases for which both a specified target and complete enrollment data were available.

both "increase" and "decrease" targets to be very ambitious. For approximately two-fifths of the schools whose targets required a change in minority enrollments (39 percent of schools with "decrease" targets and 38 percent of the schools with "increase" targets), changes in minority enrollment of 3 to 10 percentage points would have been required to meet the targets. For another 37 percent of the "decrease" targets and 32 percent of the "increase" targets, changes of more than 10 percentage points would have been required. Thus, nearly three-fourths of the schools whose targets required a change in minority enrollment levels—approximately half of the schools targeted for desegregation impact overall—had minority enrollment goals that could have been very difficult to reach.

■ Summary

MSAP grants were more or less evenly divided between schools in voluntary- and mandatory-plan districts. Nearly all of the grantee districts were experiencing overall increases in minority student enrollments, with the proportion of minority students increasing by an average of 2.4 percentage points over two years.

Most of the 1,043 funded magnets were themselves targeted for desegregation impact. In addition, 49 nonmagnet feeder schools (most of which were in mandatory-plan districts) were identified as targeted for desegregation.

Although not required under MSAP statute or regulations, two-thirds of the targeted schools had a specific enrollment goal or target for their desegregation efforts, typically expressed in terms of a particular level or an acceptable range of minority student enrollments. Included in this group of schools with specific enrollment targets were most of the schools for which a desegregation objective consistent with the statutory MSAP goals could not be identified (i.e., their intended desegregation purpose could not be classified in terms of the statutory goals of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation).

Desegregation objectives consistent with the statutory goals of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation could be identified for 615 of the targeted schools (although for more than one-third of these schools, it was necessary to infer the objective from information provided regarding minority enrollment goals). The majority (59 percent) of these schools had the objective of reducing current minority

isolation; another 26 percent had the objective of reducing projected increases in minority enrollments, which the Department of Education interprets as consistent with the goal of reducing minority isolation.

In the following chapter (chapter III), we assess the degree to which targeted schools with desegregation objectives of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation (including reducing projected increases in minority isolation) were able to meet their objectives. In chapter IV we assess the extent to which targeted schools achieved their minority enrollment goals.

III. Attainment of MSAP Desegregation Objectives

This chapter examines the extent to which schools targeted for desegregation impact under MSAP grants met the objectives of reducing, eliminating, and preventing minority isolation during the two-year periods covered by their MSAP grants. The chapter also explores the possible influence of four factors on these analysis results: biases potentially introduced by missing data and by inferring objectives, differences in the grantees selected under slightly different program regulations in the two different funding cycles, and the length of the time period over which changes in enrollment were measured. Finally, the chapter examines the extent to which particular characteristics of MSAP-supported school districts, targeted schools, and magnet programs are associated with success in meeting desegregation objectives.

Because schools in districts operating under mandatory (i.e. court-ordered, state-ordered, or OCR-required Title VI) desegregation plans may have had different constraints or expectations than districts operating under voluntary desegregation plans, results for the two groups are presented in aggregate and separately.

■ To What Extent Did Schools Targeted for Reduction, Elimination, or Prevention of Minority Isolation Meet their Desegregation Objectives?

Overall, 47 percent of the 615 targeted schools for which desegregation objectives consistent with the statutory MSAP goals could be identified and analyzed met their desegregation objectives (see table III-1). Another 107 schools (17 percent) made some progress toward meeting their objectives. Schools that intended to *prevent* minority isolation (i.e., prevent the proportion of minority students in the school from rising above 50 percent) were the most successful of the three groups: 73 percent of the 82 schools with this objective achieved it.

Schools with the goal of *reducing* minority isolation were less likely to achieve their objectives: only 44 percent of the schools targeted to reduce minority isolation did so. This group includes both those schools intended to reduce the current proportion of minority students in the school, and those intended to reduce projected increases in minority isolation; the proportions of schools in each group that met their objectives were comparable (44 percent versus 43 percent). The relatively small number of schools attempting to *eliminate* minority isolation were the least likely to achieve their objectives (33 percent).

Schools in districts with voluntary desegregation plans were somewhat more likely to achieve their objectives (51 percent) than were schools in districts with mandatory plans (44 percent). This may reflect the fact that mandatory-plan districts must pursue objectives established in the desegregation plan ordered by a court or agency, objectives which are not necessarily consistent with the specific MSAP objectives examined here.[1] Although results differ markedly for mandatory- and voluntary-plan schools in regard to the "eliminate" objective, and to a lesser extent, the "prevent" objective, these objectives account for a relatively small number of schools: only 5 mandatory-plan schools (2 percent) had the "eliminate" objective and only 24 (8 percent) had the "prevent" objective.

[1]For example, a district may want to *increase* minority enrollments in some schools to achieve the goal of *balancing* minority enrollments across all schools in the district.

Table III-1
Summary of Desegregation Outcomes for Targeted Schools

Desegregation Outcome[2]	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
Reduce minority isolation	46% *(119)*	41% *(109)*	44% *(228)*
Reduce current enrollment	47% *(96)*	41% *(64)*	44% *(160)*
Reduce projected increase	43% *(23)*	42% *(45)*	43% *(68)*
Eliminate minority isolation	0% *(0)*	80% *(4)*	33% *(4)*
Prevent minority isolation	78% *(45)*	63% *(15)*	73% *(60)*
All objectives	51% *(164)*	44% *(128)*	47% *(292)*
Total N	(323)	(292)	(615)

Next we examine in greater detail the outcomes for schools having each of the three objectives. These analyses examine the extent to which schools not meeting their objectives made some progress toward achieving them; whether district enrollment characteristics and trends for schools that achieved their objectives differed from those for schools that did not; and, among schools attempting to reduce minority isolation, the amount of reduction achieved.

Schools Targeted for *Reduction* of Minority Isolation. These schools fall into two groups: those attempting to achieve a decrease in the current proportion of minority students in the school, and those with the objective of reducing projected increases in the proportion of minority students. The two groups were equally likely to achieve

[2]Percentages indicate the proportions of schools having a particular objective that met that objective; numbers in italics indicate the number of schools that met that objective. For example, the 228 schools that reduced minority isolation represented 44 percent of the 529 schools targeted to reduce minority isolation (as shown in table II-6).

their objectives, even though the objective for the first group of schools could be considered more ambitious.

Among schools targeted for *reductions in their current percentage of minority students*, 44 percent met their objective (see table III-2). An additional 24 percent could be considered to have made some progress toward the objective of reductions in current minority isolation, since the rate of increase in minority enrollment at these schools was lower than the rate of increase for the district overall. Schools in districts operating under mandatory desegregation plans were somewhat less likely to meet this objective than were schools in districts operating under voluntary plans (41 percent versus 47 percent).

Most (84 percent) of the schools targeted for reductions in current minority isolation were located in districts in which the minority student population was *growing*: minority enrollments in these districts increased by an average of 3.5 percent during the two-year period of the grant (see table B-1 in appendix B). Among the 202 schools that did not meet the objective of reductions in the current proportion of minority students, 9 out of 10 were located in districts experiencing increases in minority enrollment (compared with 75 percent of the schools that did meet the objective). Moreover, the average *rate of increase* in district minority enrollments was higher for schools that did not meet this objective (4 percent, compared with 2 percent for schools that did meet this objective). The rate of growth in district minority enrollment levels was also higher among districts operating under mandatory desegregation plans (5 percent, compared with 3 percent for voluntary-plan districts). Thus, achieving reductions in current minority enrollments would have required most schools to counter district-wide demographic trends.

Among schools targeted for *reduction of projected increases in minority isolation*, 43 percent met this objective. In fact, 33 schools (21 percent) had reductions in their current proportion of minority students. Schools with the objective of reducing projected increases in minority isolation were even more likely to be located in districts in which minority enrollments were growing than were schools with the objective of reducing current minority isolation (95 percent versus 84 percent) (see tables B-1 and B-2 in appendix B).

Table III-2
Desegregation Outcomes for Schools Targeted for *Reduction* of Minority Isolation

Desegregation Outcome[3]	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
Schools with objective of reducing current isolation			
Reduction in current % minority *(met objective)*	47% *(96)*	41% *(64)*	44% *(160)*
Increase in % minority proportionately smaller than district-wide increase *(progress toward objective)*	21% *(44)*	28% *(44)*	24% *(88)*
Total N	(205)	(157)	(362)
Schools with objective of reducing projected increase in isolation			
Reduction in current % minority *(met objective)*	23% *(12)*	20% *(21)*	21% *(33)*
Increase in % minority proportionately smaller than district-wide increase *(met objective)*	21% *(11)*	23% *(24)*	22% *(35)*
Total reducing projected increase *(met objective)*	43% *(23)*	42% *(45)*	43% *(68)*
Total N	(53)	(106)	(159)

Amount of Change in Minority Enrollment Achieved. The impact on minority enrollments in the schools meeting the objective of reducing minority isolation varied dramatically. Among the 160 schools meeting the objective of *reducing current minority isolation*, minority enrollments decreased on average by 5.9 percent (see table III-3). The amount of change experienced by individual schools ranged from a high of -55 percent to a low of -0.1 percent. Among the 68 schools meeting the objective of *reducing projected increases in minority isolation*, the average amount of

[3]Percentages indicate the proportions of schools having a particular objective that met that objective; numbers in italics indicate the number of schools that met that objective.

change was much smaller (-0.7 percent); some schools achieved reductions in minority enrollment of as much as 27 percent, but others experienced increases of as much as 13 percent.

Table III-3
Amount of Change in Minority Enrollment Rates in Schools Targeted for Reduction[4]

	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
Schools meeting objective of reducing current % minority			
Average	-5.5%	-6.6%	-5.9%
Range	-24.1%/-0.2%	-55.1%/-0.1%	-55%/-0.1%
Schools meeting objective of reducing projected increase in % minority			
Average	-0.1%	-1.1%	-0.7%
Range	-7.7%/+8.5%	-25.7%/+12.9%	-26.7%/+12.9%
All schools targeted for reduction			
Average	+0.7%	+2.3%	+1.5%
Range	-24.1%/+25.4%	-55.1%/+25.5%	-55.1%/+25.5%

Among all 521 schools targeted for reduction, the net change in minority enrollment was small but positive—a *net increase* of 1.5 percent. This is due to the fact that reductions in current minority isolation achieved in some schools targeted for reduction were offset by increases in minority isolation in other schools targeted for reduction. This latter group includes both schools meeting the objective of reducing projected increases (where some increase may still occur, as long as it is less than the rate of increase for the district as a whole), as well as schools not meeting either of the reduction objectives.

[4]Change in minority enrollment rates is expressed as a *proportional change* (i.e., the ratio of the amount of change in level of minority enrollment experienced over the two-year period examined relative to the initial minority enrollment level). For example, a school whose minority enrollment changed from 60 percent to 55 percent would have experienced a rate of change of -8.3 percent over this period ((55 percent-60 percent)/60 percent).

Schools Targeted for *Elimination* of Minority Isolation. This objective was both the least common objective and the one least likely to be met given the overall high levels of minority enrollment in the schools. Only 12 schools were identified as having this objective, and only 4 of these schools (33 percent) met the objective (see table III-4). These four schools were all located in districts operating under mandatory desegregation plans.

Table III-4
Desegregation Outcomes for Schools Targeted for *Elimination* of Minority Isolation

Desegregation Outcome[5]	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
Elimination of minority isolation *(met objective)*	0% *(0)*	80% *(4)*	33% *(4)*
Reduction in % minority, to a level higher than 50% *(progress toward objective)*	71% *(5)*	20% *(1)*	50% *(6)*
Increase in % minority, but *proportionally smaller* than district-wide increase *(progress toward objective)*	0% *(0)*	0% *(0)*	0% *(0)*
Total N	(7)	(5)	(12)

Most of the schools that did not meet this objective could be considered to have made some progress toward the objective of eliminating minority isolation: they achieved some reduction in minority enrollments, although not enough to bring them below the 50 percent threshold (six of the remaining eight schools). The remaining two schools had increases in minority enrollment levels that exceeded the district-wide rate of increase.

Each of the 12 schools targeted for the elimination of minority isolation (i.e., to reduce the percentage of minority students to less than 50 percent of the school's enrollment)

[5]Percentages indicate the proportions of schools having a particular objective that met that objective; numbers in italics indicate the number of schools that met that objective.

had initial minority enrollments of more than 50 percent, with an average minority enrollment of 69 percent (see table B-3 in appendix B). However, the average minority enrollment for the *districts* in which these schools were located was only 50 percent, and in half of these districts the overall minority enrollment was declining. Schools that were able to eliminate minority isolation tended to be located in the districts in which overall minority enrollment was relatively low (39 percent, on average) and declining. Schools that did not meet this objective, on the other hand, tended to be located in districts where overall minority enrollment exceeded 50 percent (55 percent, on average) and was increasing (by an average of 5 percent over the two-year period).

Schools Targeted for *Prevention* of Minority Isolation. Schools targeted for prevention of minority isolation were much more likely to achieve their objective than schools with other objectives (73 percent, compared with the overall success rates of 44 percent for the reduction objective and 33 percent for the elimination objective) (see table III-5). In addition, more than half of the schools that did not meet this objective did remain below the district-wide average minority percentage (13 out of 22 schools).

The 22 schools not meeting this objective were contending with demographic circumstances that increased the difficulty of maintaining enrollment below the 50 percent threshold. Initial minority enrollments in these schools tended to be very close to the 50 percent threshold (47 percent, compared to 39 percent for schools meeting the objective—see table B-4 in appendix B). In addition, these schools tended to be located in districts in which minority enrollments were increasing more rapidly, with the rate of increase averaging 7.5 percent over the two-year period—more than double the district rate of increase (3.2 percent) for schools that met the objective.

Table III-5

Desegregation Outcomes for Schools Targeted for *Prevention* of Minority Isolation

Desegregation Outcome[6]	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
Prevention of minority isolation *(met objective)*	78% *(45)*	62% *(15)*	73% *(60)*
Increase in % minority to a level higher than 50%, but remaining below district average *(progress toward objective)*	12% *(7)*	25% *(6)*	16% *(13)*
Total N	(58)	(24)	(82)

■ To What Extent Might the Analysis Results on the Attainment of Desegregation Objectives Be Influenced by Aspects of the Analysis Design?

It is possible that these analysis results are influenced by one or more aspects of the analysis design, such as the exclusion of schools for which desegregation objectives could not be identified, the inclusion of inferred objectives for some schools, the use of data from two different grantee cohorts, and the relatively short time period examined. To investigate this possibility, four additional analyses were performed.

Potential Bias from Missing Data on Desegregation Objectives. As discussed in chapter II, the grantee applications and other documents available for these grantees did not provide sufficient information to identify classifiable desegregation objectives for 453 of the targeted schools (42 percent). These schools were necessarily excluded from the analysis of attainment of desegregation objectives.

As noted previously, approximately one-third of these schools were located in eight grantee districts for which available documentation precluded identification of

[6]Percentages indicate the proportions of schools having a particular objective that met that objective; numbers in italics indicate the number of schools that met that objective.

classifiable desegregation objectives for *all* of the schools targeted for desegregation impact. With only one exception, these districts were large, urban school systems with district-wide minority enrollments of 75 percent or more. Thus, in demographic terms, these districts were similar to the analysis sample overall.

The remaining two-thirds of the excluded schools represented 72 of the remaining 111 MSAP grantees—nearly two-thirds of the analysis sample. In each case, desegregation objectives could be determined for some—but not all—of the schools targeted for desegregation impact by these grantees. Thus, each of these 72 grantees is represented to at least some extent in the analyses.

Based on this examination of targeted schools that were excluded from the analyses of attainment of desegregation objectives, we have no reason to believe that excluding these schools introduced any systematic bias in the analysis results.

Potential Bias from Inferring Desegregation Objectives. For about one-third of the targeted schools in the above analyses (219 out of 615), the desegregation objectives used in the analyses were not explicitly stated by the grantees. Although grantees frequently did not explicitly identify one of the three MSAP desegregation objectives for targeted schools, we were able to infer objectives for some of these schools from grantees' statements about district-wide desegregation goals, enrollment targets, and other information.

Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) of these inferred objectives were for schools in districts operating under mandatory desegregation plans that were not subject to Department of Education review for conformity with the MSAP statutory goals of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation. The majority of the inferred objectives were for reducing minority isolation (85 percent of all inferred objectives), either through reductions in current minority enrollment (39 percent) or reductions in projected increases in minority enrollment (46 percent). The latter group (i.e., schools with an inferred objective of reducing projected increases in minority isolation) accounted for nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of all the schools having the objective of reducing projected increases in minority isolation.

The use of inferred desegregation objectives introduces the possibility that calculated attainment rates were low because we assessed schools' attainment of incorrectly inferred goals. To examine this possibility, we recalculated attainment rates for the

group of schools whose desegregation objectives had not been inferred. The *overall* success rate was virtually unchanged when cases with inferred objectives were excluded from the analyses (47 percent and 48 percent—see table B-5 in appendix B).

However, among schools having the objective of *reducing projected increases*, the rate of success in meeting that objective, as defined in these analyses, was substantially higher when the cases with inferred objectives were excluded from the analyses (55 percent, versus 43 percent when those cases were included). Overall, the schools with inferred objectives tended to have *higher* rates of increase in minority enrollment (an average of 4.9 percent, compared with 3.8 percent for schools with explicitly stated objectives). In addition, they tended to be located in districts that experienced *lower* rates of increase in overall minority enrollment (3.3 percent, compared with 4.6 percent for the districts in which schools with explicitly stated objectives were located).

It is also possible that the standard used to assess schools designated as having the objective of reducing projected increases does not fully reflect the goals of these schools as framed by the grantees in their desegregation plans. The majority of the "reduce projected increase" schools with inferred objectives had identified either a maximum level of minority enrollment to stay below or a range of minority enrollment percentages to stay within; these targets thus allow minority enrollment in the school to increase at a faster rate than the district overall as long as the minority enrollment does not exceed the upper limit of the target. Of the schools *not* meeting the objective of reducing projected increases, most (82 percent) did meet their enrollment targets. (The extent to which targeted schools were able to meet their minority enrollment targets is discussed further in chapter IV.)

The success rate for schools intended to *prevent* minority isolation was somewhat lower when inferred objectives were excluded (66 percent, compared with 73 percent when inferred objectives were included). However, this affected a relatively small number of all targeted schools.

Funding Cycle. Several modifications to the program regulations were introduced in FY 1991, including the requirements that districts avoid adversely impacting the racial

balance in feeder schools,[7] and that grantees submit annual performance reports on desegregation and educational quality outcomes. These modifications do not appear to be associated with improvements in the extent to which targeted schools succeeded in reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation: overall rates of success were comparable between the two cohorts (47 percent for the schools funded in FY 1989 versus 48 percent for the schools funded in FY 1991—see table B-6 in appendix B).

Time Period Examined. A plausible argument can be made that the two-year grant period does not allow schools sufficient time to demonstrate the true desegregation impact of MSAP support. In at least some cases, grant awards were not made until after students had been assigned to the schools they would attend during the first grant year; in a few other cases, magnets were not scheduled to open until the second grant year. Under such circumstances, a school's enrollment composition during the second grant year would represent the effect of only one year of program operation. Furthermore, in commenting on proposed modifications to program regulations, some urban school districts have argued that three or four years of program operation are required to significantly impact student enrollments.

To investigate the possibility that the analysis of two-year outcomes underestimated the desegregation impact of MSAP-supported magnet programs, we extended the analysis of enrollment trends for the FY 1989 grantees to also examine a three-year period and a four-year period following the award of the MSAP grant.[8] However, assessing enrollment change over a longer time period reduced rather than increased the percentage of targeted schools that met their desegregation objectives, from 48 percent at the end of a two-year period to 40 percent at the end of a four-year period (see table B-7 in appendix B)[9]. Further investigation of this trend revealed that, although some schools did meet their objective for the first time three or four years after the grant, they were outnumbered by schools that had met their objective earlier,

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[7]Previously, avoiding adverse impact on racial balance in feeder schools was not a regulated criterion for desegregation plan eligibility.

[8]Since the latest enrollment data from CCD is from the 1992-93 school year, an analysis of longer term outcomes for the FY 1991 cohort could not be conducted.

[9]This analysis was restricted to the subset of 291 FY 1989 grantee schools for whom two-year, three-year, and four-year outcome data were available. Three- and four-year outcome data were not available for the remaining five targeted schools included in the FY 1989 analyses.

but had failed to meet it at one or two later time points. Over the extended time period, only 30 percent of the schools met their objective at all three time points, and 42 percent did not meet their objective at any of them. It may be that much of the desegregation benefit of MSAP support is realized in the first year or two, with little additional benefit accruing in subsequent years. These results may also reflect the discontinuation of some magnet programs in schools or districts that did not continue to receive MSAP funds, changing demographics in the districts, changing goals and objectives in the districts with regard to these schools after their MSAP grant ended, or any other changes that may have occurred after the end of the grants.

■ Are Particular Characteristics of MSAP-Supported School Districts, Targeted Schools, and Magnet Programs Associated with Success in Meeting Desegregation Objectives?

The findings presented above suggest that a school's likelihood of meeting its desegregation objective may vary depending on the demographic context surrounding the school. Other factors that arguably might affect a magnet school's ability to meet its desegregation objective include the type of magnet program (whole-school dedicated magnet, whole-school attendance-zone magnet, or program-within-a-school [PWS]), the school's initial proportion of minority students, the district's initial proportion of minority students and subsequent change in minority enrollments, and the nature of the district's desegregation plan (mandatory or voluntary). To examine the impact of these factors, we conducted logistic regression analyses to estimate the influence of each of these variables and the extent to which they were statistically significant factors in explaining school success in meeting desegregation objectives.

We found that demographic characteristics of both schools and districts were strongly associated with success in meeting desegregation objectives (see table III-6). Schools initially having high proportions of minority students relative to their districts were *more likely* to meet their objectives. At the same time, schools in districts that had higher overall proportions of minority students initially and/or were experiencing higher rates of growth in minority enrollment levels were *less likely* to meet their objectives.

The type of magnet program was also associated with the likelihood of meeting desegregation objectives. Specifically, both whole-school attendance-zone magnets and PWS magnets were *less likely* to meet their desegregation objectives than were whole-school dedicated magnets. For different reasons, both attendance-zone and PWS magnets affect only a subset of a school's enrollments, while the remainder of the school population continues to be drawn from the surrounding neighborhood. Therefore, such programs are almost certain to have less impact on the school's overall racial composition than are dedicated magnets, where all students are subject to enrollment guidelines.

Although schools in districts operating under voluntary desegregation plans were somewhat more likely to meet their desegregation objectives than were schools in districts operating under mandatory desegregation plans, this difference was not statistically significant. Similarly, neither school level (elementary/other), the amount of experience the district had with magnet schools, nor the scope of the district's overall magnet schools effort were associated with success in meeting objectives.[10]

[10]These variables were examined in initial analyses, but not included in the final models.

Table III-6
Relationship between Characteristics of Magnet Schools and Success in Meeting Desegregation Objectives

Magnet Program/School/District Characteristic	Coefficient	Standard Error
Magnet program type		
Attendance zone	-.36	.29
Program within a school	-.38	.28
School characteristics		
Initial % minority	.03*	.01
District characteristics		
Initial % minority	-.04**	.01
Change in district % minority	-.33**	.07
Desegregation plan type		
Voluntary plan	.18	.25
Desegregation objective		
Prevent	2.31**	.50
Reduce projected increase	.35	.29
% cases correctly classified	72.74%	
Total N	(338)	
Overall proportion of schools meeting objective	39%	

* P < .01
** P < .001

Finally, even after taking school and district demographics into account, schools with the objective of "preventing" minority isolation were *more likely* to achieve their objective than were schools with the objective of "reducing" or "eliminating" isolation. This no doubt reflects the fact that, in districts where minority enrollments are increasing generally, limited increases in minority enrollment are less difficult for schools to achieve than are reductions.

Summary

Overall, fewer than half of the schools targeted for reduction, elimination, or prevention of minority isolation were able to meet their desegregation objectives during the two-year time period examined. However, some schools that did not meet their desegregation objective might be considered to have made some progress towards doing so.

School and district demographics had a strong impact on the likelihood that a school would meet its desegregation objective. Meeting objectives was *more likely* for schools that initially had higher proportions of minority students relative to the district, and *less likely* for schools in districts with initially high and/or increasing minority enrollment levels.

Nonisolated schools were considerably more successful in preventing minority isolation than isolated schools were in reducing or eliminating minority isolation. This appears to be due to the relatively greater difficulty of reducing minority isolation in the kinds of schools and districts targeted by MSAP, particularly when district minority enrollments are increasing, as was the case for most of the schools attempting to reduce isolation.

In the following chapter, we examine success in meeting desegregation goals from an alternative perspective by considering the specific minority enrollment targets that MSAP districts established for their targeted schools and the extent to which the schools were able to meet them.

IV. Achieving Minority Enrollment Targets in MSAP-Supported Schools

The preceding chapters focused on the extent to which targeted schools met the statutory goals of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation in targeted schools. As noted in the introduction, another perspective on what these schools were trying to accomplish with the support of MSAP funding is found in the minority enrollment targets that districts set for the schools. While reaching targeted levels or ranges of minority enrollment is not specifically required in the MSAP regulations (which call only for districts to reduce, eliminate, or prevent minority isolation), these enrollment targets do represent desegregation goals as seen by the grantee districts and schools; and in this chapter we examine the extent to which these goals were reached.

■ To What Extent Have Targeted Schools Succeeded in Reaching Specified Minority Enrollment Targets?

Although MSAP grantees were not required to specify minority enrollment targets in their grant applications, most districts (including some operating under voluntary desegregation plans as well as some operating under mandatory plans) did specify a *targeted or projected level of minority enrollment* that they intended each school to achieve. In many cases these enrollment targets were consistent with the broader

objectives of reducing, preventing, or eliminating minority isolation, but in some instances, enrollment targets allowed for increases in minority enrollments. As stated earlier, the time frame for meeting many of these targets was longer than the two-year grant period. Nevertheless, it may be of interest to examine the extent to which grantee schools were able to meet their minority enrollment targets by the end of the grant.

Success in meeting enrollment targets was determined by comparing minority enrollments during the second year of the grant period to the target stated in the grant application. Schools with targets expressed as a *range of percentages* within which minority enrollments were to fall were counted as successful if their Year 2 enrollments fell within the targeted range. Schools with targets expressed as a *maximum (or minimum) percentage* were counted as successful if their Year 2 enrollments fell below the specified maximum (above the minimum). Finally, schools that specified a particular *level of minority enrollment* were counted as successful if their Year 2 enrollments fell within ± 2 percentage points of this level.

Not surprisingly, districts were less successful in achieving these specific enrollment targets than they were in achieving the more general desegregation objectives of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation (39 percent versus 47 percent overall—see tables IV-1 and III-1). Because the enrollment targets represent a specific level or range that the district is seeking to achieve, in many cases they represent a more ambitious goal than, for example, simply reducing the percentage of minority students by an unspecified amount.

Table IV-1
Schools that Met Minority Enrollment Composition Targets within MSAP Grant Period, by Source of Desegregation Plan

Ambitiousness of Minority Enrollment Target	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
No change required	68%	82%	76%
	(69)	*(123)*	*(192)*
(N)	(102)	(151)	(253)
Decrease in % minority required			
Change of 0-3%	26%	14%	21%
	(9)	*(4)*	*(13)*
Change of 3-10%	67%	9%	7%
	(4)	*(3)*	*(7)*
Change of >10%	7%	11%	8%
	(4)	*(4)*	*(8)*
Total reaching target	10%	11%	11%
	(17)	*(11)*	*(28)*
(N)	(162)	(96)	(258)
Increase in % minority required			
Change of 0-3%	53%	50%	51%
	(8)	*(15)*	*(23)*
Change of 3-10%	25%	14%	19%
	(7)	*(4)*	*(11)*
Change of >10%	0%	3%	2%
	(0)	*(1)*	*(1)*
Total reaching target	24%	22%	23%
	(15)	*(20)*	*(35)*
(N)	(62)	(89)	(151)
Overall % reaching target	31%	46%	39%
Total N	(326)	(336)	(662)

Moreover, success in achieving specific targets varied considerably depending on the nature and ambitiousness of the target specified. Approximately one-third of the schools had specified a targeted level or range of minority enrollment that was comparable to their current minority enrollment level, such that *no change* in minority enrollment was required. Three-fourths (76 percent) of these schools succeeded in maintaining their minority enrollment composition over the two-year period covered by the grant, thus "meeting" their enrollment targets; however, nearly one-fourth of the targeted schools seeking to maintain their current enrollment composition were unable to do so.

The schools for which the enrollment targets required a *reduction* in minority enrollments were least successful in reaching the targeted minority enrollment levels: only 11 percent reached their designated target. Schools in which the target required a reduction of no more than 3 percent were most likely to meet their targets, while schools that had specified more ambitious goals were less likely to achieve them. Among schools in which enrollment targets allowed for an *increase* in minority enrollments, the overall success rate was higher (23 percent), but the same picture emerges: schools for whom the enrollment target involved a change of 3 percent or less were more likely to reach their targets than were schools where the targets were more ambitions.

Schools in districts operating under mandatory desegregation plans were more successful in reaching their desegregation targets than were schools in districts with voluntary plans (46 percent overall for mandatory-plan schools, versus 31 percent for voluntary-plan schools). This difference may well reflect differences in the nature of the targets specified. Schools in districts operating under voluntary plans were more likely to target a specific level of minority enrollment, while schools in districts operating under mandatory plans were more likely to set a range within which minority enrollment should fall. Enrollment targets for schools in voluntary-plan districts were also more ambitious: 151 of the schools in mandatory-plan districts (45 percent of the total) had minority enrollment targets that they already had met, as contrasted to only 31 percent (102) of the 326 schools in voluntary-plan districts. However, it is also possible that, as a result of the adjudication process, magnet programs operating under court-ordered plans were more carefully designed. Furthermore, the stakes associated with success or failure may be higher for districts operating under a court-ordered desegregation plan.

■ Are Particular Characteristics of MSAP-Supported School Districts, Targeted Schools, and Magnet Programs Associated with Success in Reaching Minority Enrollment Targets?

To assess the significance of the relationships among desegregation plan type, ambitiousness of minority enrollment target, and success in meeting the target, we performed logistic regression analyses (see table IV-2). As suggested above, the ambitiousness of the enrollment target was strongly related to success in reaching the target: schools whose initial minority enrollment levels were closer to their targets were more likely to have reached their targets by the end of the second grant year. In addition, schools whose targets allowed a broader range of enrollment levels were more likely to reach their targets. After adjusting for these characteristics of enrollment targets, schools in voluntary- and mandatory-plan districts did not differ significantly in the likelihood of meeting their targets.

Table IV-2
Relationship between Characteristics of District Context, Minority Enrollment Target, and Success in Reaching Targets

	Coefficient	Standard Error
Magnet program/desegregation background		
Desegregation plan source: voluntary	-.16	.21
Minority enrollment target		
Distance to target	-.23**	.03
Breadth of target range	.90**	.01
% cases correctly classified	87.7%	
N	662	
Proportion of schools meeting target	39%	

* P ≤ .01
** P ≤ .001

Summary

This chapter examined desegregation impact in terms of whether or not the targeted schools met a specified level or range of minority enrollment. By the end of the two-year grant period, relatively few (39 percent) of the targeted schools in the FY 1989 and FY 1991 MSAP grantee districts had reached the minority enrollment targets set for them in their desegregation plans. Furthermore, success in reaching a targeted level or range of minority enrollment appeared to be directly related to the ambitiousness of the goal that had been set. These findings are not surprising, as it is doubtless more difficult to achieve a specified level or range of minority enrollment than simply to reduce the percentage of minority enrollment by an unspecified amount, or to limit projected increases in minority enrollment. Moreover, grantees may have regarded their enrollment targets as long-term goals to be accomplished over several years rather than within the two years covered by their MSAP grant.

These analyses, like those of the previous chapter, focused on individual schools, and in particular on whether or not those schools had met a predetermined objective or enrollment target as a result of the MSAP awards. Success in meeting these objectives or targets appears to depend to at least some extent on how the objective or target is specified. In the following chapter, we examine two additional indicators of school desegregation that are defined solely in terms of changes in enrollment composition in schools, rather than in terms of a prespecified objective or target.

V. Other Desegregation Outcomes for Targeted Schools

The preceding chapters have focused on the extent to which MSAP grantees met the statutory goals of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation in targeted schools. However, a variety of other, more global measures of desegregation are also used in many district desegregation plans and policy studies. Racial balance, a desegregation indicator that compares the racial composition in each school to the district average, is often used by courts overseeing the implementation of individual desegregation plans. Another measure, change in the number of minority-isolated schools, has been used in research assessing the national impact of desegregation efforts.[1] The following chapter examines the extent to which MSAP-supported magnet programs contributed to achieving these alternative desegregation goals.

■ To What Extent Has the Number of Minority-Isolated Schools Been Reduced among Those Receiving MSAP Support?

By supporting the reduction, elimination, or prevention of minority isolation in targeted schools, MSAP might be expected to reduce the number of minority-isolated schools in the districts funded. Although the MSAP designation of a school as "minority-isolated" is based on a somewhat arbitrary cutoff point (minority

[1]See, for example, *The Growth of Segregation in American Schools: Changing Patterns of Separation and Poverty Since 1968* (Orfield 1993).

enrollments of 50 percent or more),[2] it may be of interest to examine whether the number of targeted schools that were minority-isolated in the grantee districts changed over the two-year grant period.

Among the schools targeted for desegregation impact in the two grantee cohorts, the overall number of *schools* with minority enrollments exceeding 50 percent increased by 4 percent over the periods examined, from a total of 699 at the beginning of the grant periods to a total of 728 at the end (see table V-1). While 10 out of the 112 grantee *districts* in this sample (9 percent) did attain a net decrease in the number of targeted schools that were minority-isolated, 25 (22 percent) grantee districts experienced a net increase. When a more conservative definition of a minority-isolated school is used (i.e., 80 percent minority), the increase is even more pronounced: the number of such highly isolated schools increases from 250 to 272—an increase of 10 percent.

Several factors may contribute to this finding. In many of the minority-isolated schools, reducing minority enrollments to below the 50 percent cutoff point may be an unrealistically ambitious goal (and indeed, only 2 percent of the targeted schools had the objective of eliminating minority isolation in that school). Many of these districts were themselves minority-isolated: district-wide minority enrollments averaged 58 percent across the two cohorts, and ranged as high as 97 percent. The difficulty of eliminating minority isolation in targeted schools was heightened by the increases in overall minority enrollments that most of these districts (90 percent) experienced over the two-year period examined. In fact, the nonisolated schools that became minority isolated were located in districts that were experiencing particularly rapid growth in minority enrollments (averaging 5.4 percent over two years, compared with 3.5 percent for the sample as a whole).

[2]Several districts use an alternative definition of a "minority-isolated" school. In San Diego, CA, for example, schools with minority enrollments exceeding 80 percent were considered "minority-isolated."

Table V-1
Change in Number of Minority-Isolated Schools During MSAP Grant Period, by Source of Desegregation Plan and Overall

Ambitiousness of Targeted Minority Enrollment	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
Initially isolated schools			
# remaining isolated	289	389	678
# becoming nonisolated	7	14	21
(N)	(296)	(403)	(699)
Initially nonisolated schools			
# remaining nonisolated	116	81	197
# becoming isolated	22	28	50
(N)	(138)	(109)	(247)
Net change in number of minority-isolated schools			
# initially isolated	296	403	699
# isolated by 2nd grant year	311	417	728
Net change	+15	+14	+29
Total N	(434)	(512)	(946)

■ To What Extent Has Racial Balance in Enrollments Improved among Targeted Schools?

A system-wide perspective on school desegregation is obtained by examining changes in the degree of racial balance or imbalance across schools within a district. By measures of racial balance we mean the extent to which an individual school reflects the race composition of the district overall, a measure that is often accepted by courts as indicative of the extent to which schools are desegregated. We examined the extent to which racial balance among the *targeted* schools in MSAP-grantee districts improved over the two years covered by the MSAP grant. Specifically, we calculated the differences between school and district-wide minority enrollments at the beginning and the end of the grant period, and assessed the extent to which the schools targeted for desegregation impact moved closer to the district-wide average, even as that

average changed.[3] The analysis was conducted both for the entire sample of targeted schools and for those schools whose objectives were to reduce or eliminate minority isolation.

Overall, the gap between school and district-wide proportions of minority students narrowed slightly over the two-year periods examined, as somewhat more than half of the targeted schools moved closer to the district average (see table V-2). At the beginning of the time period, differences between school and district minority enrollments averaged 15 percentage points; two years later the gap had narrowed by nearly 1 percentage point, to approximately 14 percent.

Schools that were intended to reduce or eliminate minority isolation had base-year enrollments that were, on average, slightly more divergent from the district average than those of the targeted schools in general. These schools also showed somewhat greater reductions in the gap between school and district minority percentages (2 percentage points over two years) than did the sample as a whole. These differences were more pronounced among schools in mandatory-plan districts, which had an average reduction of nearly 3 percentage points in the gap between school and district minority enrollment percentages. These results suggest that, although magnet schools supported by MSAP may be having some impact on racial balance across targeted schools, the impact is modest.

[3]On average, minority enrollments in the districts overall increased by more than 2.4 percentage points over the course of a two-year grant period.

Table V-2
Extent to which Targeted Schools Succeeded in Improving Racial Balance, by Source of Desegregation Plan and Overall

Ambitiousness of Targeted Minority Enrollment	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
All schools			
Avg. deviation from district % minority[4]			
Beginning of grant period	14.6%	15.3%	15.0%
End of grant period	13.3%	15.0%	14.2%
Net change	-1.3%	-0.3%	-0.8%
Proportion of schools moving closer to district % minority	59%	55%	57%
Total N	434	512	946
Schools with objectives of reduce or eliminate			
Avg. deviation from district % minority			
Beginning of grant period	14.5%	17.3%	15.7%
End of grant period	12.9%	14.6%	13.7%
Net change	-1.6%	-2.7%	-2.0%
Proportion of schools moving closer to district % minority	36%	66%	63%
Total N	227	176	403

■ Summary

The two alternative measures of school desegregation examined in this chapter provide somewhat differing pictures of school desegregation in MSAP grantee districts. The number of minority-isolated schools among those targeted for desegregation impact increased somewhat over the two-year periods covered by the MSAP grants; this undoubtedly is a reflection of the overall increases in minority enrollments experienced by most of the MSAP grantee districts during the periods

[4]Deviations reflect changes in percentage points.

covered by the MSAP grants. At the same time, the overall racial balance across schools improved somewhat, with more than half of the targeted schools (57 percent) moving closer to the average minority enrollment composition for the district overall. Because the latter measure is directly linked to the district-wide enrollment composition, rather than a fixed standard (e.g., minority enrollments exceeding 50 percent), it is less likely to be affected by demographic trends occurring within the school districts.

VI. Summary and Implications

The Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) provides support for magnet schools that are part of an approved desegregation plan in order to *reduce, eliminate, or prevent minority isolation* in the magnets or in designated feeder schools. Specifically, magnet schools are intended to contribute to desegregation by encouraging students to enroll in schools outside their neighborhood attendance zone, or by attracting white students back into the district from private schools or surrounding districts, thereby improving the balance of minority and white students in schools within the district. This study sought to assess the extent to which magnet schools supported by MSAP grants during the FY 1989 and FY 1991 funding cycles contributed to school desegregation. Key research questions include the following:

- How were the MSAP goals of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation translated into desegregation objectives for schools?

- To what extent did the schools targeted for desegregation impact succeed in meeting their desegregation objectives?

The following section provides a summary of the major findings from the study and a discussion of the implications for program operations as well as for further research.

Summary of Findings

This analysis found that the impact of federally supported magnet schools on minority isolation has been somewhat limited, at least among the FY 1989 and FY 1991 grantees. Overall, 47 percent of the targeted schools fully met the statutory goals of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation during the period covered by the grant, and another 17 percent made progress toward meeting those objectives. Among the relatively small number of schools with the objective of *preventing* isolation (13 percent of the targeted schools), a substantial majority (73 percent) were able to fully meet their objective. However, among the predominant group—schools with the objective of *reducing* isolation (85 percent of targeted schools)—only 44 percent were able to fully meet their objective. Among the very small group of schools with the objective of *eliminating* minority isolation, 33 percent fully attained the goal of reducing minority enrollment to below 50 percent of total enrollment.

Results of analyses using two other measures of school desegregation were consistent with this finding of limited impact. First, the proportion of schools having specific minority enrollment targets that met these goals was even smaller than the proportion with desegregation objectives that fully met these objectives (39 percent versus 47 percent). Second, among all 946 targeted schools for which complete enrollment data were available, there was a net *gain* of 29 (4 percent) in the number of minority-isolated schools over the two-year grant period, from 699 to 728.

However, there were improvements in racial balance among these 946 schools over the period of their grant. More than half (57 percent) of the schools narrowed the gap between their own proportion of minority students and the district-wide average. The average amount of change was small: an overall decrease of almost 1 percentage point, from about 15 percentage points to 14 points. Among the subset of schools with the objectives of *reducing or eliminating* minority isolation, a somewhat higher proportion (63 percent) narrowed the gap (on average approximately 2 points, from 15.7 to 13.7 percentage points).

It is recognized that in many of the grantee districts, schools with the objective of reducing minority isolation faced an uphill battle, as the overall minority enrollment in the districts was increasing. Furthermore, achieving desegregation objectives proved to be more difficult in schools operating attendance-zone or program-within-a-school

magnets (the two most common types of program), since such programs can affect only a portion of the school's enrollment.

However, this study was somewhat constrained by the difficulties encountered in determining the desegregation goals and objectives for some of the grantees. Although the goals outlined in grantees' desegregation plans were broadly consistent with MSAP statutory goals of reducing eliminating, or preventing minority isolation, in many instances it proved difficult to identify the specific schools targeted for desegregation impact, or to determine the specific desegregation objectives those schools were intended to achieve. In other instances, grantees identified targeted schools as having the objective of increasing minority enrollment, which is not one of the statutory goals of MSAP. These schools may have been intended to draw minority students from other, feeder schools targeted for reductions in minority isolation, but if so, documentation identifying these feeder schools was not available.

■ Conclusions and Implications

The Magnet Schools Assistance Program provides support for magnet school programs, allowing districts to pursue school desegregation through voluntary means. The impact of MSAP-supported magnets on reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation, either in the magnet or in a feeder school, was relatively modest for these two grantee cohorts. This is at least partly due to the countervailing influence of demographic trends toward increased minority enrollments in these school districts. Gauging the effectiveness of MSAP-supported magnets in terms of reducing, preventing, and eliminating minority isolation must therefore take the district demographic context into account.

From a program performance perspective, two other observations are worth noting:

1. Although MSAP grantees were required to demonstrate that the schools for which support was sought were part of an approved desegregation plan, there was no clear requirement that desegregation objectives be explicitly identified in the application for each magnet and targeted feeder school, or that objectives be expressed in terms of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation in those schools, as defined by MSAP. Thus, in several cases it was difficult to determine from grantees' applications which schools

were targeted for desegregation impact or what each school should be held accountable for. More detailed guidance has been provided in the grant application and closing notices for the FY 1993 and FY 1995 funding cycles. However, the issue of specifying desegregation objectives for individual schools will need to be addressed further if schools and districts are to be held accountable for meeting their objectives.

2. MSAP grantees were also required to submit annual performance reports, providing data on white and minority enrollments for the targeted schools and the district overall. However, there was no requirement to identify the desegregation objective of each targeted school, or to link the enrollment data provided to those objectives. As a result, the annual performance reports that were submitted often did not, even when combined with the grantee's application, provide sufficient information for assessing grantee performance with respect to MSAP's desegregation goals. ED monitoring staff may have obtained additional documentation to clarify these gaps through follow-up requests and conversations with grantees; however, this supplemental documentation was generally not available for review when this study was conducted several years later.

This report addresses only one aspect of the impact of the Magnet Schools Assistance Program: the desegregation of individual schools. Other important issues beyond the scope of this report include within-school segregation, desegregation of school districts, and the impact of magnet programs on the nature and quality of the education experience and student achievement. In addition, it is clear that there is much support for magnet programs among students and parents as well as educators. A complete assessment of MSAP's accomplishments should take all of these factors into account, particularly the extent to which MSAP support contributes to its goal of "providing high quality programs of instruction."

Glossary

Attendance zone magnets—whole-school magnets that draw students from all areas of a district and have admission policies that give some preference to students living in the school's neighborhood attendance area.

Dedicated magnets—whole-school magnets that draw students from all areas of a district and give no preference to students living in the school's neighborhood attendance area.

Desegregation objectives—the statute-defined purposes of reducing, eliminating, or preventing minority isolation in schools, which underlie MSAP-funded programs.

Eliminate minority isolation—a desegregation objective for minority-isolated schools that aims to reduce minority enrollments to below 50 percent of total enrollment (that is, for the school to cease being minority-isolated).

Enrollment target—see *Targets*

Explicitly-identified objective—a desegregation objective for a school that is explicitly identified in the grant application or associated documentation.

Feeder school—a school from which students are drawn to attend a magnet school.

Grantee [district]—a district receiving MSAP funding in FY 1989 or FY 1991. Districts funded in both funding cycles are treated as separate entities for each cycle.

Inferred objective—a desegregation objective that was not explicitly stated by the grantee but could be inferred from minority enrollment targets or other information provided in the grantee's application and/or performance reports.

Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP)—a federal program that provides financial assistance for public schools to develop or expand magnet school programs designed to promote school desegregation and quality instruction. MSAP has supported magnet programs in 138 school districts with grants amounting to $955 million over the period from FY 1985 through FY 1994.

Magnet schools—schools offering a special curriculum not generally available in other schools in a district, to create an incentive for students to enroll in schools outside their neighborhood attendance area.

Magnet school program—a district-wide program that promotes desegregation by offering one or more individual magnet schools or programs within the district.

Mandatory desegregation plan—a document specifying procedures for meeting the legal requirements of a court, state government, or other government agency that a district reduce, eliminate, or prevent the isolation of minority students in schools.

Minority group students—MSAP regulations definition that includes black, Hispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaskan Native children.

Minority isolation—a condition in which minority group children constitute more than 50 percent of the enrollment of the school, as defined in 34 CFR Part 280.4(b) (11-1-89 Edition).

Prevent minority isolation— a desegregation objective for schools that are in danger of becoming minority-isolated that aims to keep minority enrollments from rising to above 50 percent of total enrollment.

Program within a school (PWS)—a magnet program that serves some but not all of the students in a school (e.g., an aeronautics program for 200 students in a 1000-student high school).

Reduce minority isolation—a desegregation objective for minority-isolated schools that aims to reduce the percentage of minority students in the school.

Reduce current minority isolation— a desegregation objective for minority-isolated schools that aims to reduce the percentage of minority students in the school to below the level prior to receiving the MSAP grant.

Reduce projected increases in minority isolation—a desegregation objective for minority-isolated schools where minority enrollments are expected to increase in the absence of a magnet program; the objective is to either reduce or maintain current minority enrollment levels or keep increases in minority enrollments below the district average increase.

Special curricula—courses of study featuring a particular subject matter (e.g., arts or computer science) or teaching methodology (e.g., Montessori program) not generally available to all students in a district.

Statutory goals [of MSAP]—the desegregation goals specified in the MSAP statute: to reduce, eliminate, or prevent minority group isolation in schools.

Targeted school—the school—magnet or feeder—in which minority group isolation is to be reduced, eliminated, or prevented *as a result* of the funded magnet program.

Targets—specific minority enrollment goals for schools, usually stated in terms of achieving a specific level of minority enrollment (e.g., 40 percent) or one falling within a range of values (e.g., 35-45 percent).

Voluntary desegregation plan—a documented strategy that a district is voluntarily implementing to reduce, eliminate, or prevent isolation of minority students in its schools. For districts operating under voluntary desegregation plans to receive MSAP funds, the Secretary of Education must approve the plans as adequate under Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Whole school magnets—magnet programs that are offered to every student in a school.

References

Orfield, G. (1993). *The Growth of Segregation in American Schools: Changing Patterns of Separation and Poverty Since 1968.* Cambridge, MA.: Harvard Project on School Desegregation.

Steel, L. & Levine, R. (1994). *Educational Innovation in Multi-racial Contexts: The Growth of Magnet Schools in American Education.* Palo Alto, CA.: American Institutes for Research.

A. Technical Issues in Data and Coding

This appendix describes how data used in this report were derived and how several problems that arose during data collection were resolved.

■ MSAP-Supported Magnets and Targeted Schools

The magnets and targeted nonmagnet feeder schools included in this study were identified from grant application narratives, progress reports, and OCR Plan Eligibility Determination (PED) reports. At least one of these sources was available for each of the 119 grantees, and all available sources were taken into consideration in constructing the school list for each grantee. We included nonmagnet feeder schools in the analysis only when a grant application or PED explicitly identified them as targeted for desegregation impact through the operation of MSAP-funded magnet schools.[1]

[1] During the FY 1991 funding cycle, many grantees included enrollment data on vast numbers of feeder schools, apparently as a demonstration that the operation of the magnet programs was not causing the minority enrollment in feeder schools to exceed the district average minority enrollment percentage. Very few of these schools were identified as targeted feeders, however, and so most are not included in our analyses.

Most MSAP-supported magnet schools were themselves targeted for desegregation impact: that is, the magnet programs were intended to improve enrollment composition at the school in which the magnet was located. However, for 24 magnets, the grant application stated that the desegregation objective of their program was to reduce, prevent, or eliminate minority isolation at one or more *identified feeder schools*. These magnets were considered *nontargeted* and were excluded from the analyses of desegregation impact. There is reason to believe that some additional schools in the sample would have been classified as nontargeted if grant documents had provided more detailed information on desegregation objectives (see the discussion below concerning schools that projected increases in their minority enrollments).

■ Desegregation Objectives

The analysis of whether the desegregation objectives of targeted schools had been met was based on the assumption that each such school had one (principal) objective that could be expressed in terms of the intended change in the proportion of minority group students in that school between the base year and the second grant year. The quality of information on schools' desegregation objectives provided by grant documents varied considerably.

Stated Objectives. For approximately half of the 1,068 schools identified as targeted for desegregation impact, the school's objective was more or less explicit. Often the grantee stated outright that their objective was to reduce, prevent, or eliminate minority isolation; in some instances grantees indicated an intention to maintain current minority enrollment levels or to increase minority enrollments. In other cases one or more objectives were stated, but in a form that required some translation to produce a single objective that was consistent with the statutory goals of reducing, eliminating, and preventing minority isolation. For instance, some objectives were stated in terms of a school's proportion of *nonminority* students, in which case we translated the objective into the complementary objective for the proportion of minority students. Some applications identified a variety of objectives for a targeted school, often at varying levels of generality. In such cases, the objective most specific to the minority enrollment of the whole school was used. (For example, a school whose objectives included balancing enrollments in its within-school magnet programs, preventing white flight from the district, and increasing the overall

enrollment of white students in the school would be classified as a school whose objective was to reduce minority isolation.)

Inferred Objectives. For approximately one-third of the 1,068 schools, a desegregation objective was not stated, but sufficient information was available to allow us to infer an objective. In particular, when a grant application did not supply a specific desegregation objective, but did provide an enrollment target, we compared the school's base-year minority enrollment with this target and inferred whether the goal was to reduce, eliminate, or prevent minority isolation, or to limit projected increases in minority enrollments.

Reclassification of Objectives. Once a stated or inferred desegregation objective had been established, it was reviewed for consistency with the statutory goals and regulatory definitions. Where appropriate, objectives were reclassified as follows:

- Minority-isolated schools whose stated intention was to "eliminate" minority isolation by reducing minority enrollments to a level exceeding 50 percent were classified as having the objective of *reducing* minority isolation.

- Minority-isolated schools whose stated intention was to maintain the current level of minority enrollment within the context of overall district increases were classified as having the objective of *reducing projected increases* in minority isolation.

In all, objectives consistent with the statutory goals of reducing, eliminating, and preventing minority isolation could be determined for 615 of the targeted schools.

■ Minority Enrollment Targets

Like desegregation objectives, the desegregation targets used in analyses were expressed in terms of the target percentage of minority group students. Targets varied widely both in form and in ambitiousness.

When grantees presented targets in terms other than percentage of minority students, we translated them to fit the analysis framework. When a target was expressed as a

range of values around the district average, we calculated a specific target using the Year 2 district proportion of minority group students appropriate to the grade level served by the targeted school.

The ambitiousness of enrollment targets was calculated as the distance from the school's base-year minority percentage to the "nearest end" of the Year 2 enrollment target range.[2] If the goal was stated as a maximum or minimum percentage ("no more than X percent," "no less than X percent"), this maximum or minimum was interpreted as the nearest end of the enrollment target range. However, if the enrollment target was stated as a single level ("the minority percent will be X percent"), an artificial range of plus or minus 2 percentage points was created around it, both to calculate goal ambitiousness and to assess whether the school met its enrollment target.[3]

■ School- and District-Level Enrollment Data

School-level enrollment data used in analyses were drawn from the CCD files. In addition to being comprehensive, CCD data are uniform: data on the enrollments of whole schools are collected at the same time (mid-October) each year. The CCD files contain race-ethnicity data for the three school years relevant to the study (1988-89, 1990-91, and 1992-93) for nearly all FY 1989 and FY 1991 MSAP grantees.[4]

We encountered relatively few problems in using CCD data. In order to link CCD enrollment data with individual schools in the magnet schools study, it is necessary to associate each school with its NCES identification code. Identification numbers could not be found for 39 MSAP-supported schools, which were necessarily excluded from analyses. (However, some of these were clearly new schools that would have been excluded from most analyses anyway.) When grantees had provided data on their

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[2] New schools, which lacked base-year enrollment data, and schools whose base-year enrollments fell within a target range, were characterized as having an initial distance of zero from the target range.

[3] Note that this is a relatively narrow range: when districts specified an enrollment range for themselves, it usually spanned 20 or more percentage points.

[4] In addition, CCD enrollment data for the 1991-92 school year were used in an analysis of three-year desegregation outcomes among FY 1989 grantee schools.

enrollments, we compared base-year figures provided by grantees with the corresponding numbers from the CCD files. It was not unusual for statistics from the two sources to differ by a few percentage points.[5] Usually the variations were so small that the school's desegregation objectives and enrollment targets were consistent with either version of the school's enrollment profile. However, the enrollment percentages for six targeted schools diverged by 10 or more percentage points, or they diverged by smaller amounts, but in such a way that the objectives and goals stated in applications were inconsistent with the school's CCD enrollment profile. These cases were excluded from analyses.

We explored the possibility of using enrollment data supplied directly by FY 1991 grantees in analyses,[6] but found they had several serious drawbacks. First, data were missing for a substantial fraction of these grantees. (According to the MSAP program office, some grantees did not submit a progress report for the 1992-93 school year.) Where possible, we obtained enrollment statistics from alternative data sources, such as final reports and grantees' applications for FY 1993-94 grants, but even so, Year 2 data were missing for many schools in the FY 1991 cohort.

Second, self-reported enrollment data were nonuniform in several respects. For instance, some grantees reported

- results for individual programs within schools rather than for the entire host school;
- enrollments for the magnet schools as a group rather than individually;
- estimates of what the school enrollments *would* have been without the magnet program, or "base-year" enrollment statistics that were actually current at some earlier date when a desegregation plan was established;
- enrollment statistics for the semester following the two-year grant period;

[5] Variations do not always reflect errors in one or the other data source: the district-supplied counts were not necessarily made at the same time as the counts used in the CCD.

[6] FY 1991 grantees were required to submit annual reports on their progress in meeting their desegregation objectives. FY 1989 grantees were not.

- enrollments contrasting groups other than "minority" and "nonminority"—e.g., black versus other, where "other" included substantial numbers of Hispanic or Asian students as well as white students; and

- overall district averages rather than averages specific to the grade level of individual schools.

Such variations made it impossible to obtain uniform measurements across districts of the degree of achievement during the grant period. Furthermore, since grantees were frequently rather vague about *what* they had reported, it was even difficult to identify such departures from the expected when they occurred. For all these reasons, we used CCD data for all school-level enrollment statistics.[7]

CCD data were also the source of enrollment-related descriptive statistics on the FY 1989 and FY 1991 grantee districts, including the number of schools and students in the district, the percentage of schools that were minority-isolated and that exceeded the district proportion of minority students, and the change in district-wide minority enrollments between the base year and the second grant year. CCD data were used to compute the district-wide proportions of minority students at the elementary, intermediate, and high school levels that were used to determine the degree to which school enrollments came more closely to approximate the district average over the grant period.[8]

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[7] There was the following exception. For four schools, complete enrollment data (base year and Year 2 school and district minority percentages) were unavailable in CCD but were obtained from grant documents and used in analyses.

[8] Since CCD files do not provide information on the ethnic composition of each grade, it was impossible to calculate district averages tailored to specific grades served by a school (i.e., the district average used for a K-3 school would be the same as that used for a K-5 school in the same district: the district average for elementary schools). However, the proportion of minority students in grade ranges spanning the elementary-intermediate and intermediate/senior high and elementary-senior high levels were also calculated and assigned as appropriate to "mixed level" schools in the study.

■ Type of Magnet Program

The program descriptions that grantees provided in their applications and reports often lacked the information needed to determine the type of magnet program operating in a school. It was especially difficult to determine whether whole-school magnets were dedicated or enrolled students from a neighborhood attendance zone as well as students applying from outside it. We supplemented the information supplied by grantees with data collected during the 1992 national survey on magnet programs conducted by AIR for the first phase of this study.[9] However, even with the help of this additional data source, we could not confidently classify a quarter of the programs in the study sample.

■ Desegregation Plan

The desegregation plan under which a district operates is classified as "mandatory" if it has been ordered by a court or state agency, and "voluntary" if it has been submitted by a district voluntarily, or to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Applications from districts operating under the two types of plans are subjected to different review processes by the Department. The Department reviews voluntary plans in more detail and may require changes in plans it judges to be out of compliance with program guidelines before finding applicants eligible for participation in MSAP. The source of each grantee's desegregation plan was obtained from the following sources (in order of precedence): the plan type stated or implied by an Office for Civil Rights Plan Eligibility Determination report; information supplied by MSAP staff; and desegregation history narratives in grant applications. The plan types assigned to each grantee were reviewed by Department staff before the analyses presented in this report were performed.

[9] See *Education Innovation in Multiracial Contexts: The Growth of Magnet Schools in American Education* (Steel and Levine 1994).

■ Data Required to Assess Desegregation Outcomes

The assessment of whether schools reduced, prevented, or eliminated minority isolation was limited to 615 schools with classifiable desegregation objectives and for which complete enrollment data were available. Complete enrollment data consisted of four measures: the proportion of minority students in the school and district-wide during the base year, and the same proportions during the second grant year. A supplemental analysis of schools failing to meet the objective of preventing further increases in minority isolation used data on the school's enrollment target (if any).

The assessment of whether schools met enrollment targets was limited to a total of 662 schools: 23 new magnets for which data were available for Year 2 school and district-wide minority enrollments, and 639 existing schools for which school and district-wide enrollment data were available for both the base year and the second grant year. Although base-year enrollments were not needed to determine whether the enrollment target had been met, they were needed to calculate the ambitiousness of the enrollment target, which was used in reporting all analysis results.

B. Supplementary Analyses

Table B-1
Demographic Context for Schools That Did and Did Not Meet Objective of Reducing Minority Isolation
(Where Initial Minority Enrollment Was Above 50%)

	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
All Schools with Objective			
Initial % minority in school	79.9%	76.7%	78.5%
Initial % minority in district	67.0%	61.2%	64.5%
Proportional change in district % minority	2.6%	4.6%	3.5%
Schools in districts with *increasing* minority enrollment	157 76.6%	146 93.0%	303 83.7%
(Total N)	(205)	(157)	(362)
Schools Meeting Objective			
Initial % minority in school	81.9%	79.5%	81.0%
Initial % minority in district	67.3%	60.5%	64.6%
Proportional change in district % minority	1.7%	3.5%	2.4%
Schools in districts with *increasing* minority enrollment	64 66.7%	56 87.5%	120 75.0%
(Total N)	(96)	(64)	(160)
Schools Not Meeting Objective			
Initial % minority in school	78.1%	74.7%	76.6%
Initial % minority in district	66.8%	61.6%	64.4%
Proportional change in district % minority	3.3%	5.4%	4.3%
Schools in districts with *increasing* minority enrollment	93 85.3%	90 96.8%	183 90.6%
(Total N)	(109)	(93)	(202)

Table B-2
Demographic Context for Schools That Did and Did Not Meet Objective of Reducing Projected Increases in Minority Isolation (Where Initial Minority Enrollment Was Above 50%)

	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
All Schools with Objective			
Initial % minority in school	63.1%	64.6%	64.1%
Initial % minority in district	67.0%	65.7%	66.2%
Proportional change in district % minority	4.2%	3.5%	3.8%
Schools in districts with *increasing* minority enrollment	52 98.1%	99 93.4%	151 95.0%
(Total N)	(53)	(106)	(159)
Schools Meeting Objective			
Initial % minority in school	60.3%	64.6%	63.1%
Initial % minority in district	60.8%	64.2%	63.0%
Proportional change in district % minority	5.0%	4.0%	4.4%
Schools in districts with *increasing* minority enrollment	22 95.7%	43 95.6%	65 95.6%
(Total N)	(23)	(45)	(68)
Schools Not Meeting Objective			
Initial % minority in school	65.3%	64.6%	64.9%
Initial % minority in district	71.7%	66.9%	68.5%
Proportional change in district % minority	3.6%	3.2%	3.3%
Schools in districts with *increasing* minority enrollment	30 100%	56 91.8%	86 94.5%
(Total N)	(30)	(61)	(91)

Table B-3
Demograhic Context for Schools That Did and Did Not Meet Objective of Eliminating Minority Isolation
(Where Initial Minority Enrollment Was Above 50%)

	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
All Schools with Objective			
Initial % minority in school	64.8%	74.3%	68.8%
Initial % minority in district	57.7%	39.8%	50.2%
Proportional change in district % minority	4.3%	-0.0%	2.5%
Schools in districts with *increasing* minority enrollment	4 57.1%	2 40.0%	6 50.0%
(Total N)	(7)	(5)	(12)
Schools Meeting Objective			
Initial % minority in school	--	75.0%	75.0%
Initial % minority in district	--	39.1%	39.1%
Proportional change in district % minority	--	-2.4%	-2.4%
Schools in districts with *increasing* minority enrollment	-- --	1 25.0%	1 25.0%
(Total N)	(0)	(4)	(4)
Schools Not Meeting Objective			
Initial % minority in school	64.8%	71.8%	65.7%
Initial % minority in district	57.7%	42.4%	55.8%
Proportional change in district % minority	4.3%	9.4%	4.9%
Schools in districts with *increasing* minority enrollment	4 57.1%	1 100%	5 62.5%
(Total N)	(7)	(1)	(8)

Table B-4
Demographic Context for Schools That Did and Did Not Meet Objective of Preventing Minority Isolation
(Where Initial Minority Enrollment Was 50% or Below)

	Voluntary	Mandatory	Total
All Schools with Objective			
Initial % minority in school	40.6%	43.0%	41.3%
Initial % minority in district	52.5%	45.6%	50.5%
Proportional change in district % minority	4.3%	4.5%	4.4%
Schools in districts with *increasing* minority enrollment	49 84.5%	22 91.7%	71 86.6%
(Total N)	(58)	(24)	(82)
Schools Meeting Objective			
Initial % minority in school	39.0%	40.5%	39.4%
Initial % minority in district	51.0%	42.7%	49.0%
Proportional change in district % minority	3.4%	2.8%	3.2%
Schools in districts with *increasing* minority enrollment	36 80.0%	13 86.7%	49 81.7%
(Total N)	(45)	(15)	(60)
Schools Not Meeting Objective			
Initial % minority in school	46.2%	47.2%	46.6%
Initial % minority in district	57.7%	50.5%	54.8%
Proportional change in district % minority	7.5%	7.4%	7.5%
Schools in districts with *increasing* minority enrollment	13 100%	9 100%	22 100%
(Total N)	(13)	(9)	(22)

Table B-5
Extent to Which MSAP-Supported Schools Met Designated Desegregation Objectives
Excluding Cases with Inferred Objectives

Type of Objective	Vol. Plan	Mand. Plan	Total
Reduce minority isolation	48%	42%	46%
	(95)	*(58)*	*(153)*
Reduce current enrollment	48%	38%	44%
	(80)	*(41)*	*(121)*
Reduce projected increase	52%	59%	55%
	(15)	*(17)*	*(32)*
Eliminate minority isolation	0%	80%	33%
	(0)	*(4)*	*(4)*
Prevent minority isolation	70%	50%	66%
	(28)	*(5)*	*(33)*
All objectives	51%	44%	48%
	(123)	*(67)*	*(190)*
(Total N)	(243)	(153)	(396)

Table B-6
Extent to Which MSAP-Supported Schools Met Designated Desegregation Objectives, for FY 1989 and FY 1991 Grantees and Overall

	FY 1989 Grantees			FY 1991 Grantees			Overall		
Type of Objective	Vol. Plan	Mand. Plan	Total	Vol. Plan	Mand. Plan	Total	Vol. Plan	Mand. Plan	Total
Reduce minority isolation	54%	36%	45%	39%	48%	43%	46%	41%	44%
	(67)	*(50)*	*(117)*	*(52)*	*(59)*	*(111)*	*(119)*	*(109)*	*(228)*
Reduce current enrollment	57%	36%	48%	37%	45%	41%	47%	41%	44%
	(56)	*(27)*	*(83)*	*(40)*	*(37)*	*(77)*	*(96)*	*(64)*	*(160)*
Reduce projected increase	44%	35%	38%	43%	54%	49%	43%	42%	43%
	(11)	*(23)*	*(34)*	*(12)*	*(22)*	*(34)*	*(23)*	*(45)*	*(68)*
Eliminate minority isolation	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	57%	0%	80%	33%
	(0)	*(0)*	*(0)*	*(0)*	*(4)*	*(4)*	*(0)*	*(4)*	*(4)*
Prevent minority isolation	94%	62%	79%	71%	64%	70%	78%	62%	73%
	(15)	*(8)*	*(23)*	*(30)*	*(7)*	*(37)*	*(45)*	*(15)*	*(60)*
All objectives	57%	38%	47%	46%	50%	48%	51%	44%	47%
	(82)	*(58)*	*(140)*	*(82)*	*(70)*	*(152)*	*(164)*	*(128)*	*(292)*
(Total N)	(143)	(153)	(296)	(180)	(139)	(319)	(323)	(292)	(615)

Table B-7
Extent to Which MSAP-Supported Schools Achieved Designated Desegregation Objectives, Over 2-, 3-, and 4-Year Intervals

	2-Year Interval			3-Year Interval			4-Year Interval		
Type of Objective	Vol. Plan	Mand. Plan	Total	Vol. Plan	Mand. Plan	Total	Vol. Plan	Mand. Plan	Total
Reduce minority isolation	54%	37%	45%	48%	33%	40%	44%	32%	38%
	(67)	*(49)*	*(116)*	*(59)*	*(44)*	*(103)*	*(54)*	*(43)*	*(97)*
Reduce current enrollment	57%	37%	49%	51%	28%	41%	43%	25%	36%
	(56)	*(26)*	*(82)*	*(50)*	*(20)*	*(70)*	*(42)*	*(18)*	*(60)*
Reduce projected increase	44%	37%	39%	36%	38%	38%	48%	40%	42%
	(11)	*(23)*	*(34)*	*(9)*	*(24)*	*(33)*	*(12)*	*(25)*	*(37)*
Eliminate minority isolation	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	20%
	(0)	*(0)*	*(0)*	*(0)*	*(0)*	*(0)*	*(0)*	*(1)*	*(1)*
Prevent minority isolation	94%	62%	79%	81%	62%	72%	75%	54%	66%
	(15)	*(8)*	*(23)*	*(13)*	*(8)*	*(21)*	*(12)*	*(7)*	*(19)*
All objectives	57%	39%	48%	50%	35%	43%	46%	34%	40%
	(82)	*(57)*	*(139)*	*(72)*	*(52)*	*(124)*	*(66)*	*(51)*	*(117)*
(Total N)	(143)	(148)	(291)	(143)	(148)	(291)	(143)	(148)	(291)

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